

# The Nation

VOL. VI., No. 25.]  
Registered as a Newspaper.

SATURDAY, MARCH 19, 1910.

[PRICE 6D.  
Postage: U.K., 4d. Abroad, 1d.]

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## Diary of the Week.

THE Lords are well at the bottom of the bog of "Reform" into which Lord Rosebery rashly plunged them. The Rosebery resolutions are to go to a Committee, but it is clear that the Tory Party will not look at them, and that in particular his two conditions, the first the elective principle, introduced through the medium of the County Councils and the Town Councils, the second the abandonment of the hereditary basis, will be struck out. What will emerge is impossible to say. Lord Halsbury is a greater power among the Tory peers than even Lord Lansdowne, and he says flatly that all the resolutions are bad, and the third—the anti-hereditary motion—the worst of all. Even Lord Curzon, the best friend of the Rosebery policy which the debate disclosed, accepted it with many qualifications, and the only point of advance seems to be a movement in favor of a strictly limited nomination of peers by the Prime Minister of the day. In other words, the old Dragon is to have a new coat of paint and a new kind of roar.

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A MORE intransigent note was given out by Lord Salisbury, the Duke of Northumberland, and Lord Cromer, who was definitely for fastening the Lords' invasion of finance on to the Constitution. A mass of peers said frankly that the House of Commons called for reform more than the House of Lords, while Lord Curzon hinted that though Lord Rosebery might have a poor opinion of the Lords, "Potentates of Asia" and "Princes of India" greatly preferred them to the Commons. Lord Willoughby de Broke entreated them not to stultify themselves by decrying heredity. He had been a foxhound breeder all his life, and he was prepared to defend the hereditary principle in that or any other animal. The

Duke of Marlborough thought that the hereditary and honorary peers, like youth and age, would never go together. Every speech, however, agreed in expanding Mr. Balfour's watchword of a "stronger" House of Lords—that is to say, of a House more certain to clash with the House of Commons than that which exists to-day. All again united to oppose the restriction of the Veto, which, said Lord Rosebery, would establish a "precarious, muzzled, and impotent phantom," fit only for Madame Tussaud's, and the principle of popular election, which, said Lord Rosebery again, would merely bring about a "feeble understudy of the House of Commons."

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LORD MORLEY's speech supplied the one line of clear thought in this welter. It should be read by every Liberal, and sent broadcast throughout the country, for it is the only statement of the party's case with which the Front Bench has yet supplied it. The House of Lords, he said, had completely overlooked "the practical emergency," which was the Lords' invasion of finance and the dispute as to powers between the two Houses. The case for that invasion was now being destroyed. Last year the Lords claimed to be an impartial, impeccable House; now Lord Rosebery admitted it to be indefensible in constitution, and proposed to strip it of its rights and privileges. It first of all committed homicide by killing the Budget, and then suicide by denouncing itself as unfit. It was impossible to proceed with reform until the question had been settled whether the Lords were to be stronger or weaker than the Commons—the very point upon which Lord Rosebery's Cabinet Committee came to grief in 1895. It was idle to talk of the dangers of single-Chamber government when, for all the great purposes of government, the single-Chamber system existed now, while the proposal for a great, strong, and efficient second Chamber was merely a proposal to take back the extensions of popular electoral power. All the new elements, said Lord Morley, which the reformers would add to the House would be Conservative. The concoction of a second Chamber was an old *pons asinorum* of democracy, and where Cromwell had failed, it was not likely, hinted Lord Morley, that lesser men would succeed.

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It is a pity that this powerful criticism, coming from the fullest mind in the country, was not in the view of Sir Edward Grey, who, on the same night, made a somewhat distracting speech to the City Liberals. He said, satisfactorily enough, that no limitation of the powers of the Lords could be too stringent for Liberal policy, and that that was the question of this Parliament. He insisted that the root of the mischief was the hereditary principle. This done away with, the Liberals must proceed to remodel the Second Chamber, for, if they confined themselves to a Single-Chamber issue without reform, the result would be "disaster, death, and damnation." For an hereditary Chamber he would substitute an elected one on a democratic basis. It should not be chosen at the same time as the House of Commons, or for the same areas. If such bodies came to a dead-lock, he should not mind.

SURELY this is dangerous doctrine. It might involve precisely the crisis in which we are at present engaged. The substance of Sir Edward Grey's proposal was probably that of a Second Chamber of 150 members, elected, like some local bodies, for differing periods, chosen, or partly chosen, on grounds of public service, and sitting together in case of a dead-lock. The method of election would probably be *scrutin de liste*. Such a body might clearly be a powerful rival of the House of Commons, and on this ground alone the Radicals, the Labor Party, and the Irish Nationalists are certain to oppose it. Thus the moment this "naked, new-born babe" of Reform leaves its crib in Downing Street, it will have to "stride the blast" of adverse criticism. Surely the Liberals can take warning by the House of Lords, now laboriously chasing the Apple of Discord which Hippomenes-Rosebery has thrown down to them.

MEANWHILE, Lord Lansdowne trimmed and pared down the Rosebery resolutions, finally reducing them to a copy of the report of the Rosebery Committee. The Tory leader would have nothing to say to (a) a small House of Lords; (b) a serious rival to the hereditary peers; and (c) an Imperial Senate. But he admitted that the House was "badly composed," and that it did not look quite so impartial as it really was. There might be a few more Liberals in it—just for the look of the thing—and a Liberal Ministry might be allowed to exchange the now unrestricted power of the Crown in creating peers for "some well thought-out and properly restricted scheme" of adding some of their supporters. In other words, Liberals are to give away the lamp of power now in the hands of the Crown for the rush-light offered them by the Tory leader. For the rest, Lord Lansdowne suggested a large but not overcrowded House mainly elected by the hereditary peers, with a thin sprinkling of Liberal nominees and new life peers, chosen on grounds of experience and position—in other words, a "stronger and more efficient" break-water against Liberalism than the present Chamber.

LORD CREWE scoffed at this dressed-up sham. Was not the House of Lords strong enough already, that it must be made stronger still? Did Lord Lansdowne contemplate anything but a Tory House, that would pass Tariff Reform and throw out land reform and land taxation? Clearly he wanted to retain power over Liberalism, only with a little more popular credit; to keep his Unionism and dispense with the control of the Crown. Finally, the Lords passed a reference of the Rosebery resolutions to a Committee, which will bury them with a few crocodile tears, and probably resurrect a second Rosebery Report in their place.

WE strongly hope that the differences of tactics between the Government and the Irish—there is very little between the Irish and the Liberals—are being composed. Speaking at Newcastle on Wednesday, Mr. Redmond promised that he would vote for the Budget "without the change of one comma," if the Government could assure him that they would be "able effectively to deal with the Veto." On the other hand, Mr. Asquith, answering Lord Hugh Cecil on Monday, said that it was the "intention" of the Government to "pass the Budget and get it through" before the House adjourned for the spring recess. This has been interpreted to mean a reversion to the abandoned policy of Budget first, and that, in its turn, means smash, with Liberalism dead against the tactics responsible for it. On Thursday night at the Irish National banquet

Mr. Redmond deplored the idea of a severance on tactics, and Mr. Dillon spoke of the Budget as one of the best democratic instruments ever forged for Great Britain, and only objectionable to Ireland in respect of one or two taxes. "Give us the Veto and we will vote for the Budget," he added. Certainly the Government are bound to put all their force into getting the Veto. If they fail, terms may, we think, be arranged on the lines suggested in our leading article.

ON Monday Mr. McKenna explained, without excusing, his 40-million Naval Budget, in a speech which was addressed almost entirely to the Opposition. He virtually put the responsibility on the Board of Admiralty, and challenged the Tories to dispute their conclusions, an improper and unconstitutional doctrine. He said nothing on policy, and would have dropped all reference to German shipbuilding had he not been challenged by Mr. Harcourt. He did not reaffirm his seventeen German "Dreadnoughts" in March, 1912, the legend on which these Estimates have been built, but, pressed on a following night, said that if Germany "accelerated" all her unbuilt ships of this year and next, and dispensed with trials, she could have seventeen "Dreadnoughts" in 1912 and twenty-one in 1913. Thus the fabric of a new scare is being woven as the tatters of the old one fall to pieces.

THIS attitude, and the insulting indifference to Liberal opinion, brought a torrent of damaging criticism on Mr. McKenna's head. Only 34 members voted for Mr. Lough's motion reducing the men by 3,000, for the party feared to wreck the Government, while they felt that they were being played with, and the situation with the Lords used against them. But in the course of a week's debate only one Liberal speech was delivered in support of the Estimates, and the general tone on the Ministerial side was one of grave and even bitter remonstrance. The Labor Party, through Mr. Barnes and Mr. Snowden, took the same line, Mr. Barnes ruthlessly destroying the pretexts of a general German acceleration and an Austro-Italian programme of eight "Dreadnoughts," and Mr. Snowden saying gravely that the impossibilist attitude of governments on the armaments question made organized Labor and Socialism the only living force for international peace. Mr. Macdonald's, Mr. Harvey's, and Mr. Ponsonby's speeches were specially impressive.

PUBLIC interest in the United States and Canada is concentrated on the Tariff negotiations, which have, so far, been unsuccessful. President Taft thinks he is bound to apply the maximum Tariff, unless Canada gives the United States some of the favors she has given France. But then the United States Tariff is very unfriendly to Canada, and Canada buys more from the United States than she sells. The Republican party is already unpopular, and is desperately afraid of a tariff war, especially the newspaper proprietors, who are expecting their wood-pulp supplies to be cut off or made dearer. What will happen if the wasteful and stupid hostilities are commenced, will be that the trade between Canada and the United States will be largely effected through England, which will be the *entrepôt* or shop in which they buy one another's products, our merchants and shippers taking their toll. This is more profitable than Colonial preference.

EVENTS in Germany are moving with unusual rapidity. On Monday, the Chancellor announced a Bill

dealing with the Constitution of Alsace-Lorraine in the sense of conferring "greater independence." The Reichstag, at the instance of the Socialists, lost no time in passing by a narrow majority a resolution demanding autonomy for Alsace-Lorraine on the basis of universal, equal, and secret suffrage, with proportional representation. The formula, one suspects, was drafted with one eye on the Prussian conflict, which shows no sign of slackening. The demonstrations in provincial towns continue unabated. In the Landtag the Government's "Reform" Bill has now passed its third reading, but it has been turned inside out by amendments. The Centre and the Conservatives have combined to introduce the secret ballot, while retaining indirect election. This is theoretically a gain, but in practice will not do much to democratise the franchise. It means, however, that the Government will lose the power of coercing voters who happen to be minor officials.

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On Tuesday, the Reichstag, once more following Socialist leadership, took up the unfinished agitation against "personal rule," by passing a resolution in which the Government was invited to draft a Bill, establishing the responsibility of the Chancellor to it for his own acts and words, and also for those of the Kaiser, the responsibility to be enforced by impeachment before some special tribunal. The resolution is, of course, purely academic, but it bodes ill for Herr von Bethmann Hollweg's chances of carrying his Budget. On the same day there were made some significant references to Mr. McKenna's Estimates. Count Kanitz complained that "bad relations" between the two Empires continue, and that "Germany's peaceful assurances had been useless." Herr Scheidtmann for the Socialists threw the responsibility for the mistrust primarily on Germany, and declared that "the British Naval Estimates were really made in the Reichstag." It is the first principle of Socialist strategy to blame the native *bourgeoisie*, and Mr. Snowden said of our Jingoos very much what his German comrades say of theirs.

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THE French are still absorbed in the exciting Duez scandal. The "evaporation" of at least £200,000 in the liquidation of the property of the monastic orders is admitted. The only question is now whether any of the three liquidators was honest. M. Lecouturier, at least, is hardly less suspected than M. Duez. M. Jaurès, who opened a three days' debate in the Chamber, rightly insisted that the real scandal lay (1) in the choice of such men for such a task, and (2) in the immunity they enjoyed, despite the fact that their robberies were suspected as far back as three years ago. Who was their protector? Scandal points at M. Millerand, who held a number of briefs as barrister for M. Duez. The official Radicals are trying to divert hostility to the Church, and suggest that it acted in collusion with M. Duez. That personage reserves his revelations. The "Figaro" translates the general attitude of expectation in a cartoon, which represents M. Duez in his cell meditating on the theme, "Whom shall I have arrested?"

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THE Persian Mejliss still hesitates to accept the Anglo-Russian loan, burdened as it is with conditions which would ruin Persian independence. Meantime, Russia is tightening the screw. She has threatened once more to increase her garrison in Tabriz, which had been reduced to 500 men. Two versions of the pretext for this fresh aggression have been put forward. In the first, it is said that Russia demands the withdrawal from

Tabriz of the two Nationalist generals, Sattar and Baghir Khans. They are, it is suggested, a menace to foreigners—an odd complaint when one remembers how scrupulous they were while they were the absolute masters of the town. The second version complains that two "bands" of 3,000 men are hovering near Tabriz. The simple fact is, we suspect, that Russia means to convey to the Persians that if they will not accept Russian money on Russia's terms, they will have to put up with a permanent Russian occupation. But the responsibility does not lie with Russia alone. Sir Edward Grey sanctioned the original occupation of Tabriz, and pledged himself that it should be temporary. He also has sanctioned the terms of the proposed loan, which are believed to accentuate the partition of Persia, and to subject all its armed forces to Anglo-Russian control.

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MR. CHURCHILL, with his usual resourcefulness, has accomplished at a stroke the reform for which we and all Liberals have pleaded for years, and practically turned political prisoners into first-class offenders. We say "practically," for the formula adopted by Mr. Churchill is a little wide. He proposes that prisoners guilty of offences not involving "dishonesty, cruelty, indecency, or serious violence" should be subject to prison treatment which, in its turn, does not involve the meaner restrictions on personal liberty and dignity. This is a great advance, and we congratulate the Home Secretary upon it. It is not, however, quite complete. The prison system is so hard, and so tuned down to the most abandoned and wretched classes of the population, that it takes a good deal to suit it to well-meaning people, whose quarrel is with political custom, not with the criminal law. We hope therefore that Mr. Churchill will vigorously forward his predecessor's scheme of reform and add to it.

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DR. LUEGER, the Burgomaster of Vienna, was buried on Monday, with almost Royal pomp, in the presence of the Emperor, the Duke of Cumberland, several Archdukes, and the representatives of the Pope and the Kaiser. As the creator of the "Christian Socialist," or, more properly, Anti-Semitic and Clerical Party, he had become the most valuable Conservative force in Austria, and the Crown was duly grateful. The son of a beadle, emphatically a man of the lesser middle class, he owed his popularity to his instinct for understanding the prejudices of the Viennese crowd. He destroyed the Liberalism of the 'seventies, which had never cared to become popular, rarely held public meetings, talked an academic jargon, and relied largely on the support of wealthy and cultivated Jews. He championed the "small man" and, above all, the little shopkeeper against the monopolist and the international financier.

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LUEGER was German as against all other races, but Austrian and Catholic even before he was German. He led a feud against the Hungarians, whom he used to call the "Judaeco-Magyars," almost as fierce as his crusade against the Jews. It is difficult now to remember that when he was elected in 1895 the Crown refused to sanction the choice of Vienna, and yielded in 1897 only after his repeated re-election amid demonstrations which recalled the days of Wilkes. His first care was to break the hold of Jewish finance upon the city. He was a good administrator, and, despite his hatred of Socialism, proceeded, with complete success, to municipalise all the public services of the city.

## Politics and Affairs.

### THE DUTY OF THE LIBERAL LEADERS.

THE Government have arrived at a stage of their policy when they must take a decision of great moment, and, when taken, adhere to it. On one issue the ground has been cleared. The House of Lords have not waited to see the Government's proposals for abbreviating their powers; they have tacitly admitted that the body which grasped last November at the power of the purse cannot, in their present form, defend that act or abate the popular judgment upon it. As Lord Morley put it, the Lords first commit homicide on the Budget, and then commit suicide by admitting themselves unfit to do the deed. The House of Lords of to-day is dead; it may linger on, mummy-fashion, embalmed and enwrapped in the garments of the past; as a living force, it exists only in the imagination of men like Lord Halsbury. But the debate on Lord Rosebery's resolutions has taken us a step further. It shows that, sceptical as are the ablest champions of the Lords of their ability to face democracy, the House itself is unwilling and unable to reform itself. The Rosebery resolutions are still-born. The debates have revealed an indomitable pride of caste, which will tolerate no mixture with the base blood that Lord Rosebery's suggested vaccination with ichor from Little Peddlington would bring with it. The peers do not want to rub shoulders with new men who will "come in on a 'bus," with "a few lawyers and county councillors," as Lord Lansdowne contemptuously said. Democracy or no democracy, they stand by hereditary rule as a by-plan of the Creator, thoughtlessly thrown aside by innovating Man; and while they grope about for new defences and allies and subterfuges, they maintain their war on representative government, and mean only to arm themselves with fresh weapons against it.

In all this the Liberal Party, and, in spite of Sir Edward Grey's speech, we hope we may now say the Liberal Government, may divine the wisdom of its first and only policy. The House of Lords is at war with the House of Commons, with Liberalism and all its works, with democracy and democratic finance, with self-government for Ireland. It will not yield one inch in that struggle until it knows that its head, and not the head of its enemy, will fall; in other words, that the Crown is ready to exercise upon the peers, by the advice of its Ministers, the power which can alone restore the balance of constitutional rule, and give the Monarchy, as of old, the support of two alternative forms of government. It is a mere commonplace, therefore, to say that Veto must come first. Clearly it must precede any system of "reform"—for that will have to pass through the doors of the House of Lords, armed as they are with triple brass. It must also go before the Budget—for the Budget, important as it is, is a weapon and incident in this fight, not its centre and prize. Thus far all members of the coalition—Liberals, Labor men, and Irish Nationalists—are agreed. Nor is there, so far as the Budget is concerned, any alternative tactic. The debates of the week make it obvious that the Lords will not pass the Budget intact, and that their zeal to

have it sent up to them is mere hypocrisy. When it goes, therefore, it should go as the second object-lesson for the electorate, already enlightened by the refusal to pass or to discuss the resolutions on the Veto. The country will then see the full meaning of this Revolution of the Rich, economic and political. But, like Mr. Redmond, we see no point in the House of Commons loosing its hold of the Budget before the Veto has been dealt with. A safe and wise plan would be, we think, to ask the House of Commons to pass it in its preliminary stages and then to send it up as the last act of a Government that has either got the King's assent to a creation of peers, or, failing that assent, is prepared to resign or to appeal to the electorate.

Is this plan one on which the Irish will unite with the British part of the coalition? We see no reason to doubt it. Mr. Redmond disowns opposition to the Budget as a whole on the ground of specific taxes. He declares his willingness to vote for it on condition of an effective dealing with the Veto. He has a heavy stake in this matter as well as we; for the hopes of Home Rule rest, not only on the disappearance of the Veto, but on the maintenance of good feeling between the British and Irish peoples. But a dissolution on the destruction of the Budget by Irish votes would mean that the Budget, and the attack on the Lords, and the hopes of Home Rule, would wither at a breath. For the defeat of the Bill "referred" to the electors by the Lords would naturally be taken as a second object-lesson, following on that of 1893, in the beneficence of an over-ruling House. Clearly, therefore, both sides have an interest in averting so wretched, so senseless, a catastrophe, and Liberals would not forgive their leaders if it came about on a line of tactics which they thought had been abandoned for a better one. All of us fancied that it was to be Veto first and Budget second, and we shall be surprised to learn that the Prime Minister's announcement on Monday has reversed the order. Mr. Redmond does, indeed, seem to go beyond this, and to suggest that the Budget should be dropped altogether unless, and until, the Government can produce the King's authority for a creation of peers. But what if it fails in this quest? Is it then to go empty-handed to the electors, confessing a double defeat, and with no new fact, no promise of better success on a second appeal?

Now, on this matter it is well to be candid. Grave events will follow such a situation, and no man can foretell their issue. But it ought not to occur; it is so bad a thing that it must not occur. Our leaders must not quarrel with the Irish without good cause; the Liberal Party must not allow them to quarrel. It is well to consider, therefore, whether we need reach a *cul de sac*. Is it not possible to ease the situation both for the Crown and for the Liberal Party and its allies? The House of Commons persisting, and the House of Lords remaining recalcitrant and irreformable, a state of revolution inviting counter-revolution, and the ultimate employment of force, is set up. A dispute as to powers has arisen between the two Houses, in which neither will give way, while the Crown will not, or cannot, act. We confess we contemplate this deadlock with great reluctance. If the Crown is properly advised, it ought

not to happen. The King is a good constitutional Monarch, not a supreme and irresponsible over-lord. He acts through his Ministers. They, in turn, have a right to call on the Crown in certain emergencies, and we can imagine no greater emergency arising in a democratic State than the theft by the non-representative House, of powers belonging to the representative Assembly. There is every reason to believe that the King hated the action of the Lords last November, and a gross indignity to him is involved in the way in which the Peers have discussed their privileges and status without the smallest regard, direct or indirect, to the interests and powers of the Crown from which they derive. But if he does not act, the reproach lies with our chiefs, and it is gravely laid upon them to discover a way out of the difficulty. Saving the Crown, the only court of appeal is the nation. Should not the people be asked to settle this question by a specific reference, which could not in the nature of things become a precedent, for it would end the dispute as to powers, and lay the corner-stone of a new Constitution? In other words, why should not the Veto resolutions be embodied in an Appeal to the People Act? The House of Lords would refuse such a measure at their peril, and with consequences clear to the minds of all. Its rejection would mean that they dared not face the people, and that fact, in turn, must bring us within sight of the end.

#### THE ONE ISSUE FOR LIBERALISM.

THE reform of the House of Lords is eminently the subject for Lord Rosebery. It is a theme for the master of polished speaking. It gives occasion for the exercise of a certain pseudo-ingenuity in a region divorced from the harsh tests of practical reality. It affords an opening for the display of a Liberal and modern spirit in the castigation of archaic anomalies and indefensible privileges. At the same time, it offers a vantage ground for that superiority of mind which detaches itself from all that Liberalism and the modern spirit practically require. It shows what politics might be under conditions other than those which actually obtain. A set of circumstances may be quite easily imagined in which Lord Rosebery's speeches would have an important bearing on practical affairs. Unfortunately, they are never the circumstances which are actually found at the time and in the place where Lord Rosebery is speaking—a point which, among others, distinguishes him from great orators of the type of Demosthenes, Cicero, Gladstone, or Bright. In one point, however, Lord Rosebery is pre-eminent. When he wishes to justify a party, an institution, or a creed, he can always select some incident in his own career to which that party, that institution, or that creed has been opposed, and in which it has proved itself right, and Lord Rosebery has been proved wrong. Thus, on Monday, the most cogent instance that he could adduce of the wisdom of the House of Lords and the necessity of a Second Chamber was its treatment of the legislation, particularly of Home Rule, in which he bore a responsible part between 1892 and 1895. This kind

of self-castigation Lord Rosebery is wont to administer with an apparent unconsciousness that the blows are falling on his own shoulders which recalls the most perfect type of Indian ascetic. It is altogether in keeping with Lord Rosebery's statesmanship that he should disclaim all intention of embodying his scheme in a Bill, and that the operative part of his resolution should, in fact, be limited to a single and to a purely negative suggestion. It is also instructive to find an ex-Liberal statesman crying out in horror at the suggestion that the House of Commons possesses that predominance in the Constitution which always belonged to it, and which, in words and in effect, he claimed for it in the controversy of 1895.

While Lord Rosebery's speech, if read in the proper spirit, will be found to blend instruction with amusement, the real point of the controversy was put directly and powerfully by Lord Morley, whose speech will, we hope, be framed and diligently read by his colleagues with their morning and evening prayers. Before approaching the question of reform, the thing to be determined is whether we want to make the House of Lords stronger or weaker. Now, the Campbell-Bannerman resolutions undoubtedly tend to make it weaker—weaker at least during the periods when a Liberal Government holds power. Under a Conservative administration we are already accustomed to Single-Chamber Government, and it is remarkable that, in dilating on the terrors of that system of Government, neither Lord Rosebery—who cannot sleep for thinking of what the Colonies will say of us if we should dispense with a Chamber of a kind from which they are happily free—nor Sir Edward Grey, who sees death and damnation in the Single-Chamber schemes, should have based their arguments on the practical experience of this country under the Single-Chamber system. They talk as though the Single-Chamber system were unknown to the civilised world except in Greece and Costa Rica. They forget the central custom of the British Constitution, under which the fate of Ministries depends on the vote of a majority of the House of Commons. Equally do they forget their own country under the recent Unionist administration. The Conservative Cabinet had, for the time, a power as plenary as that of most autocracies, and whatever check may have been applied to it did not come from the House of Lords. It may be added that, if there is one argument which appeals to the average Liberal in favor of a check on the Single Chamber, it is that derived from the dealings of Mr. Balfour's administration with the country between 1900 and 1905. It seems strange, then, that neither of these speakers should have touched on this point that lay under their eyes, until we remember that, by habit of mind, both of them are appealing to Conservative audiences, to the Conservative Press, to the Conservative forces in the Constitution. The type of Liberal statesman which relies on the applause of the opposite party has the problem of House of Lords reform well in hand.

But though personally accustomed to the contempt of his leaders for his most cherished convictions, the rank and file Liberal still expects of them some respect for the recent verdict of a General Election. It is at

this point that speeches like those of Sir Edward Grey puzzle him most. Sir Edward Grey speaks as though the Campbell-Bannerman resolutions, the Albert Hall speech, and the General Election had never been. He treats the resolutions as leading on to a Single-Chamber system, and as involving, if not fortified by proposals for reform, the certainty of division in the party and defeat in the country, while if the problem of reform is left to the other side the result is to be, politically, "disaster, death, and damnation." In all this Sir Edward Grey is speaking as though he were considering a hypothetical case, something that never has arisen, and could only arise if the Liberal Party had lost its wits. He seems wholly innocent of the simple truth that he is describing the very policy on which his own Government agreed, the very policy which was put to the country at the Albert Hall, the very policy upon which the country dealt out to the Government, not disaster, death, and damnation, but a majority of 124. The very sense and substance of the veto resolutions was to avoid the immediate decision on the question of one Chamber or two, of the hereditary principle, reconstitution, or reform. The policy of the Government was to put this issue alone to the country, and to leave any question of reform open to the other side, "unoccupied" by proposals of its own. Far from resulting in disaster, this policy was approved by a substantial majority, and had the mandate of the people been executed without hesitation and without the raising of belated and inopportune suggestions, the difficulties of the present situation might have been avoided. We may, therefore, traverse every one of Sir Edward Grey's propositions by a direct appeal to simple and obvious facts. The anti-veto policy, promised for nearly three years, did not develop into a Single-Chamber policy. It did not necessitate the discussion of reform or reconstitution. It was put to the people. The advocacy of reform was left to the other side. The result was not disaster, but a substantial majority for the Government and its plan.

If the leadership of the Liberal Party is to be more successful in the future than it has been in the recent past, two elementary conditions must be observed. Our leaders must give more consideration to the feelings of their supporters and less to those of their opponents, and they must not shut their eyes to palpable facts, or expect us to do so at their bidding. It is with some effort and at the cost of some personal sacrifice to many of the rank and file that Liberal leaders are placed in power. They owe to their supporters in return some effort to carry out Liberal ideas, some sign that Liberal policy differs from Conservative, some proof that they rely on Liberal support and not on the applause of the Opposition benches and the Unionist Press. In the matter of the reform of the House of Lords, above all, the party had every reason to believe that the Government were united, clear, and determined in their policy before the election. The party went to the poll to support that policy, and it has listened to the interpretation of its verdict, given in such speeches as that of Sir Edward Grey, with sheer stupefaction. "Leadership" of this kind must cease, or the party will cease.

### THE WOMEN'S CHARTER.

To those opponents of Woman's Suffrage who contend that the sex wrongs and disabilities admitting of legal redress are few in number and negligible in degree, the Women's Charter, drafted by Lady McLaren and discussed last week by the Lancashire and Cheshire branches of the Women's Liberal Association, furnishes an extremely effective answer. Inequality in divorce is claimed as one grievance among many. The legal structure of the family as regards the relation of husband and wife, the control of children, and of property, is biased in favor of the man, while in the pursuit of a livelihood outside the home woman is weighted with legal disabilities which restrict her liberty, and respecting which she has never been consulted. As soon as Parliament is open to ordinary processes of legislation, it is intended to institute an organized endeavor to redress these inequalities by a series of closely related Bills introduced by Sir Charles McLaren and supported by prominent Radicals and Labor men. The whole doctrine of Coverture, practically suspending the civil existence of a wife and preventing her from taking legal action except through her husband or by his consent, is to be assailed. Not only is the right to maintenance to be legally enforceable, without application to the Poor Law guardians, but a wife is to have a legal claim on the income and the estate of her husband in respect of her work as housekeeper and nurse, and an equal share to the profits of a business in which they may be jointly engaged. When husband and wife possess property on marriage, a contract entered into by both is to secure a minimum contribution to the expenses of housekeeping, and limits are to be put upon the testamentary powers of the husband, securing his wife and family against total disinheritance, while, in case of intestacy, the survivor shall be equally secured, irrespective of sex.

These are the principal demands having relation to rights within the family. About their essential equity we entertain little doubt, and, so far as changes in our statute law can secure their due enforcement, we should give a general support to the Charter. Many well-meaning and genuinely liberal-minded persons will doubtless raise the objection that to make the relation of husband and wife the subject of close commercial contract, enforceable by law, tends to degrade the marriage bond into a mere cash nexus, converting all the natural dictates of affection and duty into the hard terms of legal rights. But this criticism, on the one hand, misrepresents the scope and nature of the legal intervention that is proposed, and, on the other, ignores certain grave, and even cruel, facts in the current working of the family. Laws are made, not for the good, but for the evil-doer. Although the normal marriage relation in every social class perhaps secures for the wife and mother a tolerable amount of personal control over the expenditure of income and the care of the children, the fact that she has no legal claim upon such control tells heavily against her in those numerous cases where the marriage has turned out unhappily, or where the superior physical and financial strength of the man is

wilfully abused. At present, though a man is under legal obligation to maintain his wife and family, the wife has no effective and honorable mode of enforcing the performance of this obligation. Even where a separation order has nominally secured her an income, the difficulty of obtaining it, as evidence before the Divorce Commission shows, often compels her reluctantly to return to an unhappy union. Where a man fails to make a proper provision for his family out of his income, it ought to be possible for the wife and mother to secure an order for such maintenance without the degradation of an appeal to the Poor Law. The supplementary reform advocated by Lady McLaren, securing to the wife as a legal right the wages of a housekeeper, though in itself reasonable, appears to us very difficult of legal enforcement. If it be understood as a regular money payment, in addition to "maintenance," out of the weekly or other earnings of the husband, we can only say that its legal enforcement would be found impracticable. Lady McLaren, indeed, herself appears to realise the difficulty, arguing that "even if it could not be recovered by law from a husband, it might be a just charge on his estate after his death."

It is rightly contended that these provisions must not be regarded as merely applicable to the working-classes. Though the economic and moral status of the wife and mother in the better-to-do classes has undoubtedly improved, it falls in many cases far short of a reasonable standard, and there is much to be said in favor of the practice of marriage contracts placing at her disposal, as a legal right, a certain minimum for housekeeping expenses, suitable to the husband's means, and requiring from her a similar contribution should she possess property or be an income-earner. Though the enforcement of such legal rights might, and should be, rare, their existence would be of service, not merely in cases of extreme selfishness and neglect, but for the far more important task of reforming the general valuations set upon the status of woman and her work in the home. The failure adequately to realise the economic and social importance of the work of a wife and mother is chiefly due to the purely commercial standard of values which prevails. If the law acknowledged definite pecuniary values for woman's work in the home, and if her general rights over property and income were set on the same footing as man's, although the coercive powers of the law might seldom be brought into play, use and custom would gradually transform the whole conception of the economic and social position of woman, and the change would be attended by equally important changes in other aspects of sex relationship. Moreover, it might effect a very great improvement in the physique and *morale* of children cursed with drunken and selfish fathers. Only the other day, we heard (as many of us constantly hear) of the case of a man earning 20s. a week reserving five shillings for the support of his wife and family, and spending the rest on himself. Under German law such a state of things is not permitted. Why should we allow it here?

About some of the reforms which the Women's Charter advocates under the head of industrial equality, there will be more division of opinion among reformers.

Lady McLaren appears to favor the abolition of most sex distinctions in the Factory Acts, facilitating the employment of married women and mothers, removing the existing restrictions upon the night work of women, and in other ways putting the sexes upon the same legal basis of employment regarding hours, wages, etc. The issue is, of course, far too large to argue here. We can only say that, though some of the evils charged against the full "economic freedom" of women to work under the same conditions as men may have been exaggerated, any scheme of reform which proceeds on the assumption that the special functions of women as mothers and home-makers can be ignored in industrial legislation appears to us profoundly mistaken. We do not believe that the family wage is materially enhanced by encouraging the unrestricted competition of married women, and we are convinced that the diminution in efficiency of the home cannot be compensated for by a free development of *crèches*, and will be represented in a reduced efficiency of the health of the children. If these restraints, however, are imposed upon women mainly in the interests of society, the economic losses they involve ought, it is argued, to be compensated by society. This alternative, as far as it is practicable, we prefer to accept. The new policy of public health will be developed with due regard to these sex discriminations in industry, and though the public "endowment of motherhood" may be not directly feasible, under the more guarded form of protection of maternity and of childhood the paramount right and duty of society to safeguard the family will be realised with growing care.

#### THE SHAPING OF GERMANY.

TEN years ago the announcement that a Constitution was about to be granted to Alsace-Lorraine would have seemed to be an event which might transform the European situation. The hostility between the two great groups of Continental Powers was still a visible consequence of the annexation of these provinces. Around it still fluttered the shadowy flag of the revenge which was once more to extend the French frontier to the Rhine. Large as were the issues which united the two Alliances, it was never forgotten, even in Vienna and St. Petersburg, that the fate of the Rhine lands was the stake for which the partners might be playing in the game of high politics. In those days, Déroulède could still find a heated audience on the Boulevards when he perorated from the pedestal of Joan of Arc's statue about the lost provinces and the obligation to cherish the illusion of their re-conquest. There was always a chance that when next he seized the rein of some general's horse in the streets, he might contrive to guide it towards the Presidential Palace. The rivalry in armaments was as yet a military competition. It was for the holding or taking of European territory that the nations armed, and no one supposed that any acre out of Europe would ever seem worth the bones of a Pomeranian grenadier. All that has changed to-day.

If France and Germany have been near to war, it was over the penetration of Morocco that they disputed. The expedition to China heralded the opening out of a world horizon to German policy. Far less important than the traditional hostility of Germany and France across a land frontier, is the new rivalry between the British and German Empires on the sea. It is a naval competition which now devours the resources of civilisation, and the new factor in all the recent combinations is the island-Power which affects no concern in the provinces along the Rhine. Ten years ago a plan which may pacify Alsace-Lorraine and make of it a permanent and relatively contented member in the German federation would have marked a turning-point in European history. To-day it is an episode, important, indeed, and interesting as a German domestic event. But it will have no reaction on the grouping of the Powers and the ambitions of nations. No crowds follow Déroulède to-day.

One may doubt, indeed, whether the scheme of autonomy for Alsace-Lorraine, when Herr von Bethmann Hollweg unfolds its details, will deserve to excite even a sentimental thrill. Forty years have passed since the conquest. A new generation has arisen, resigned to its fate, and by no means discontented with its material destinies. To the plain man, it seemed, when Thiers signed the fatal treaty, that what had happened was that the people of Alsace had changed their flag. There were even then astute spectators who understood that what had chiefly happened was that they had changed their market. A region of coalfields and cotton factories had lost a stationary market on the West, to gain a larger and rapidly growing market on the East. The change involved a re-arrangement in the balance of German industries. It meant an even more important and more fortunate readjustment in the economic fortunes of the North of France. Mulhouse ceased to compete with Lille, and the Pas-de-Calais enjoyed henceforth a monopoly of the coal supply. It did not escape the notice of Thiers' critics that several members of his Government were directors of industries which lost a competitor while they kept a province. The new ties have cemented a union which no bond of sentiment has reinforced. Alsace-Lorraine acquiesces in the conquest, as Poland acquiesces in Russian rule, because a tariff has enabled her, nothing loth, to make the best of a profitable, if irksome, yoke. She has, indeed, maintained her attitude of protest in the Reichstag. She has kept up a guerilla fight for the maintenance of her individuality and her culture. The intellectual links with Paris were never wholly severed. For the right to use the French language, a steady, if unheroic, battle has constantly been waged. Sometimes the Church, sometimes the Universities, sometimes the theatre, and sometimes the school, has been its scene. But there never has been joined such a passionate conflict as the Poles continually maintain against the Prussian bureaucracy. Alsace presents none of the concrete problems which the Poles are destined to set to their German masters. She has no teeming population with an alien speech to flood the German labor market. Her lands have never tempted the Junker class to demand an

Expropriation Bill. It is no rash policy which confers upon her in the fulness of time the right to govern herself. The tardy concession may be judged by English spectators by any standard which they choose to select. It looks ungenerous beside our treatment of the Transvaal; it is magnificent beside our handling of Ireland.

One can already foresee the part which the granting of this new Constitution is destined to play in German affairs. By a small majority the Reichstag has resolved that Alsace-Lorraine shall receive, in her new charter, the boon of the equal, secret, and universal franchise. To appreciate all the malice and point of that decision, one must recollect that this resolution was carried in the very Reichstag before whose doors, a week before, the people of Berlin were clamoring in the face of an outwitted police for this same privilege of a democratic franchise. The Chancellor cannot grant to a conquered and half-alien province what he refuses to Prussia itself. Yet if he should decide to invent for Alsace a "fancy," or anti-popular, franchise, he must face the criticism of a Reichstag in which he possesses no stable majority. The battle of the Prussian franchise, in which the Reichstag is not competent to engage, will be fought on the substituted ground of the Alsatian Constitution. The Chancellor has affronted and disquieted Southern Germany by his plain avowal that the class-franchise in Prussia is the citadel of the bureaucracy which governs the Empire. The South is taking its revenge. Last year the Centre, which is, in the main, a Southern party, had thrown in its lot with Northern Conservatism in the Budget struggle that rent the *Bloc* and ruined Prince Bülow. Already it is breaking away from that alliance. Some sections of it must have followed Socialist leadership in voting this symptomatic franchise resolution. Even more significant is their adhesion to the still more startling resolution in which the Reichstag called for a Bill making the Chancellor responsible to it for his own acts and those of his sovereign, and liable to be impeached before some Special Tribunal.

That resolution, like its fellow, is likely to remain a thunderbolt that cannot reach its mark. It will take more than a resolution to create Parliamentary Government in Germany, nor is it easy to imagine that, when it comes, it will be by the old seventeenth-century device of impeachment. But the passage of these two resolutions, amid the storms of the Prussian franchise conflict, is a proof that Germany is shaping rapidly towards change and reconstruction. The inner citadel of class-rule in Prussia was never so hotly assailed, and while that struggle rages, a more leisurely, a more decorous issue has been joined in the Imperial Parliament. The two struggles are parallel, and essentially one. The Empire would be transformed if Prussia were democratised. Prussia cannot be held if no Conservative Chancellor can maintain himself in the Imperial Reichstag.

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#### A NEW STYLE OF PARTY LEADERSHIP.

TIME, which changes everything, would seem to have effected a rather serious modification in the manner of party leadership in the House of Commons. When I

first frequented it, the political chieftain—a man of common, humdrum mind like Gladstone, or Harcourt, or Randolph Churchill, or Parnell—treated his friends much as the average general (say, Napoleon) treated his troops—that is to say, he thought for them, felt for them, worked for them, and (more than anything else) perhaps, kept them in good heart. This conception of policy lasted, so far as I can discover, down to the time of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, who put quite a considerable party victory to his account, and handled the resulting majority, as some critics consider, with rather exceptional skill and success. But, judging from two or three visits to the new Parliament, I should say that this type has disappeared. Mr. Balfour did something to put it out of fashion, but the true innovators appear to be the present Cabinet. The new method is to address your thoughts, your policy, and your speeches to the *opposite* side; to discover how cleverly you can appeal, not to the mob which put you in office, but to the patriots who want to turn you out, or, if brutally repulsed in this quarter, to turn to some shy and exquisite *tertium quid* like the Silent Voter or the Moderate Man. Superficially, such an attitude might seem to argue a certain want of responsibility in the statesmen who have invented it; and even to cast some slur on the strength and purity of their democratic creed. But I have no doubt that if it succeeds, it will be widely patented, and have an immense vogue in the drawing-rooms where Liberals (with the right adjectival prefix) are still tolerated.

But has it succeeded? Well, I have seen one or two examples which have not impressed me. I have seen half the enthusiasm and freshness of a new party drawn out of it before the Parliament had been a month old, and I wonder how it will survive a fresh tapping of its life-blood. I have seen a Government, or half of it, steadily thinking one way, and nineteen Liberals out of twenty thinking the other. I have seen Liberalism dropped into a pit of despondency by its natural leaders, and plucked out of it by the captain of an allied, but still an alien, army. All these feats have been accomplished by a Government dowered with ability above the average, and furnished with new blood as well as with stores of well-tested experience. These gentlemen assumed that the Liberal Party would hear with equanimity of the dropping of the policy of guarantees, of the substitution of Reform for Veto, and of Navy Estimates for forty millions. They know better to-day; and as they have it in them to *do* better, the situation may still be saved.

This week's example of the political method I have described was not absolutely new. Something like it, I imagine, occurred when Bright and Cobden were fighting Palmerston in order to keep Liberalism Liberal. Mr. McKenna, indeed, is not a Palmerston. In former days I knew him well. He was an excellent Secretary to the Treasury, almost morbidly keen on the offences of Admirals in the way of expenditure and the general worthlessness of "Service" ideas. I found him changed indeed; but, as he commended the most astounding Admirals' Estimates ever heard of, I found that he retained the good, clerk-like manner of which, a year or two ago, I had made a mental note as promising some useful check on the whims of these high-fliers. Either manner, or the possession of what Meredith described in Sir Willoughby Patterne as "a leg," seemed to shut out from Mr. McKenna's eye any mental view of the party behind him. Not for a moment did the First Lord of the Admiralty address himself to his friends. Here was a Government, whose chief had directly pledged himself to a swift reduction of the shipbuilding vote, proposing an increase of four millions for a single year, and opening up an increase of some ten millions in ensuing years. All men knew that much of the information on which this policy had been built had turned out to be false, though Mr. McKenna had made himself personally responsible for it. Most Liberals, therefore, expected a definition of policy and a reasoned defence of the Estimates. Neither was attempted. The mentality of the speaker was clear. He was thinking, not Imperially, but electorally, and his argument, such as it was, was directed to removing from

a second election the shadow of the naval scare which, by his own word and act, had hung over the first. "Call us Little Englanders? Ship for ship, ton for ton, we build more than you. You dispute these Estimates? They are the Board of Admiralty's Estimates. Do you quarrel with them? Then you quarrel with the experts who fix our naval strength, and may be trusted not to minimise it." This was the argument, received without the smallest respect by those whom it hoped to conciliate or over-reach. For Liberalism nothing. For its electoral pledges, its historic ideas and hopes for the world, nothing. Of policy again, of the Government's aims, thoughts, and measurements of European forces—nothing. Mr. McKenna gave away the master-key of Parliamentary government, the superiority of the Executive over the experts, as coolly as Mr. Micawber handed his I.O.U.'s to Traddles.

Such an affront could not pass, and before the debate was over, the Labor men and the Radicals, weakened as they were, by their own cautious strategy, and the tremendous pull of the House of Lords controversy, had riddled these double-dealing estimates. Unfortunately, this process widened the breach between the Ministry and the most serious part of its following. Instead of taking fresh ground, Mr. McKenna worsened his old position. He had to listen without reply, or the possibility of reply, to two very grave criticisms of his statements of last spring and summer. He could no longer maintain the theory of seventeen German "Dreadnoughts" in March, 1912, on which our four "contingents" were built. And the still thinner fiction of a great outburst of Italian and Austrian "Dreadnought"-building was blown into the air. A stronger man might have admitted his double error. But then he could not have defended his Estimates. Their excess stood confessed. The Government were seen to be providing, in March, 1912, for twenty "Dreadnoughts" (*plus* the "Nelsons") to Germany's eleven or thirteen; though, in March last, they themselves laid down a margin of twenty to seventeen, added to our incomparable superiority in other types, as adequate. Before Germany can get even to her thirteen, the tale of our Imperial "Dreadnoughts" will almost certainly have gone up to twenty-two, or probably twenty-five. What could Mr. McKenna do to retain Liberal votes given solely on figures which were discredited, and now tacitly, and also avowedly, withdrawn? He chose to build up a new airy fabric of hints and inferences, as insubstantial as that which events have roughly thrown down. If the Germans "accelerated" all their construction for 1910 and 1911; if they built at their top speed (which Mr. McKenna had arrived at by subtracting from the German shipbuilding of 1906-7 the earlier delays which encumbered it); and if they did away with their trials, they "could" still have seventeen "Dreadnoughts" in 1912 and even twenty-one in 1913. Having thus made a handsome contribution to all these improbabilities by himself providing a strength in "Dreadnoughts" exceeding even two keels to one for the greater part of the so-called "danger" year, the Minister proceeded to double-bolt the door against economy and goodwill by setting up the narrowest kind of naval argument for the maintenance of commerce-destruction.

From such a competition in phantom-raising the not unresourceful Mr. Lee had to retire worsted. The legend of the false Teuton has again been revived by the Liberals for fresh use by the Tories, and in the absence of a miracle we are well on our way to a fifty-million Naval Budget. Mr. McKenna, indeed, has set a useful precedent to the inheritor of this rich bequest, for in the act of proposing his own Estimates he excused himself from the obligation to defend them. If therefore we do not get the Budget, the Government will have laid all these burdens on the nation's back, without a hope of relief and without the prospect that those who called the tune will pay their share of the piper's fee. This will be a material loss; let us all hope that we shall get off with the principles which are the stock-in-trade of Liberalism still intact.

H. W. M.

## Life and Letters.

### TWO PEOPLE IN ONE.

WHEN it was discovered that Fiona Macleod, whose works are now being reissued by Messrs. Heinemann in complete and admirable form—when a few years ago it was discovered that this mysterious Fiona Macleod, whose name and style were like the mountain rainbow, was none other than Mr. William Sharp, a familiar figure in the literary circles of London, disappointment and vexation arose in many hearts. In Fiona there had been something so alluring that the very uncertainty increased the enticement. Her readers were puzzled. Even of those whose pride it is to talk about their friendship with authors, comparatively few had boasted of her acquaintanceship. The present writer, it is true, used sometimes to hear wild Highlanders from Edinburgh hint with dark rapture at a personal beauty that matched the intangible glamor of her works; but they usually admitted that they spoke only from second-hand report, or from photographs they had seen. And behind it all one could but dimly imagine a filmy creature of the furthest Hebrides—a wraith of wind-blown mist, a voice of many waters, a mountain rainbow. That was all we knew of Fiona Macleod, beyond our admiration for her books, and, except for curiosity, there was not the slightest reason to know more.

But some industrious investigator of literature began comparing and abstracting and putting two and two together until at last, just as the arithmetical Colenso, by totting up the ages of the Patriarchs found that the book of Genesis would not work out, so this investigator discovered that Fiona Macleod, rainbow of the western isles, was none other than William Sharp, a robust and conspicuous figure in London journalism. Sensibility suffered a shock. It was indignant at the discovery, and the public was more indignant still when William Sharp boldly denied the truth. He had a perfect right to deny it. In what form, or under what name, he will write, is an author's own affair. Scott, the very model of integrity, persistently denied the authorship of "Waverley," and William Sharp had far better reason for keeping his disguise. As his widow tells us in her introduction to the new edition, he used to say, "Fiona dies, should the secret be found out." Only under the seclusion of the pseudonym was it possible for him to pursue that line of creation, and the public has no more right to tear off a pseudonym than to tear off a woman's veil. There are many natures that can only work in disguise. Even Goethe, who was no shrinking personality himself, recognised the necessity of concealment in production. "Talent," he wrote, "is like virtue; you must love it for its own sake or not at all. And neither virtue nor talent is rewarded unless you can practise it unseen, as though it were a dangerous secret." But hide their own talents as authors may, the public is not accustomed to such concealment. It regards a pseudonym as a fraudulent trade mark, and has no more hesitation in tearing off its secrecy than in flinging filth at a Suffragette. So indignation increased, and it was thought monstrous that a man should be two people at once, and one of them a woman.

Yet if ever a writer had a claim to a pseudonym, it was William Sharp. When he was about twenty-three, he came from Scotland to London, and began clutching at the skirts of literature in the ordinary way. Like most writers, he wrote what he could get to write—journalistic essays, criticism, and biography, varied by one or two rather cynical novels of modern life, and, as he happened to write honestly and well, he earned a certain reputation besides a living. So it went on till he was nearly forty, and then there came a new impetus, a kind of transfiguration, or rather an awakening of a side of his nature which had hitherto slept unconscious, or disturbed only by uneasy dreams. He himself always attributed this awakening to a friendship with the "E. W. R." to whom he dedicated the first book he wrote as "Fiona Macleod," and in letters of a year or

two later he wrote, very simply, "to her I owe my development as 'Fiona Macleod,' though, in a sense, of course, that began long before I knew her, and indeed while I was a child"; and again, "without her there would never have been any 'Fiona Macleod.'" He may have been right; a deep sympathy with thoughts and emotions hitherto suppressed may have called them into a waking life they would not otherwise have known. It was not a case of collaboration. William Sharp wrote every line of the Fiona books himself, and the ideas were entirely his own. It was, as we said, an impetus applied to a motionless rock, a fertilising of unquickened powers, an awakening of a slumbering spirit, and after such awakening any human being has a perfect right to name himself anew. That part of him was, in fact, almost as new as a christened child; and, besides, what would publishers and editors have thought if they had found their steady-going contributor wafted away into poetic imaginings and Celtic moonshine? Would they not have felt the same distrustful apprehension as a banker who finds a clerk promoting an aeroplane company, or a country rector who finds a curate preaching Tolstoy? A mountain rainbow is all very well in its place, but it is an undependable sort of thing, and does not shine its best on Ludgate Hill.

So, for the sake of both sides of his double self, the man was obliged to maintain the pseudonym. If the secret had been found out, he said, "Fiona" would have died; and it is very probable that William Sharp would have died too. But, of course, there were deeper reasons than either the sensible fear of hunger or the shy fear of lost inspiration. Fiona was really and literally a different person from William Sharp. He could deny their identity with entire truth. Everyone who has observed life is aware how many diverse spirits are combined in one apparent personality, and the writer in question was only a strongly marked example of a truth we are all conscious of. Each of us is usually "three people in one," and very often more than three. The same man is, at intervals, a coward and brave, a liar and truthful, passionate and cold, transfused with light and ditch-water in dulness. We hardly want examples outside our own experience, hardly outside ourselves; but let us turn to Goethe again. On one side, as we know, he was the Privy Councillor, the man of affairs, the practical administrator of a little State; on another, he was the man of science, the investigator of nature's open secret, much occupied with bones and leaves and prisms; on a third, he was the literary and artistic critic, precise in definition. And somewhere among these different selves lurked the fine and passionate spirit that sang as the lark sings and drew all the world to listen. Even in the outward man these distinctions were felt; for his friend and secretary writes:—

"At times Goethe would be silent and short, as though a cloud lay upon his soul. There were days when he seemed to be filled with icy coldness, as when a keen wind sweeps over plains of frost and snow. And next time he would be like a smiling spring morning, when the cuckoo's note is heard, and brooks run tinkling down between the meadows."

In the same way, any reader can distinguish what Germans call his Privy-Councillor manner, his scientific manner, and the utterance of the poetic spirit, nor could the three be more separate if we chose three different names for the man; just as, if the Baconians were right, we might still continue to call part of Bacon's work by Shakespeare's name, and no harm done.

Or, to take a parallel instance nearer to ourselves: a few years ago there was living in Christ Church a clerical don who, without being a greater mathematician than became Oxford, was expert in teaching even the hunting-men the cost of papering a room, leaving intervals for windows and doors, with sufficient accuracy to enable them to scrape through Smalls. Precise and old-fashioned in attire, he was precise and rather starchy in manner also. He observed the regulations of donnish life with minute correctness, and was regarded by parents as just the right type of the tutor to whom they could with equanimity entrust the conscientious direction of wayward youth. Little did they think that this

model of academic precision was the man who had written,

"Speak roughly to the little boy,  
And beat him when he sneezes."

Yet the Reverend Charles Dodgson, Senior Student of the House, really contained within the same skin and bones that entirely different man known to all the world as Lewis Carroll.

If it is objected that such people as he, are, at all events, two men in one, while the author of the *Fiona* books pretended to be a man and a woman both, we can remember Swinburne's assertion that all poets are bisexual. He made it about Tennyson's "*Rizpah*"—using the line where the mother, gathering her son's bones under the gallows, tells how they moved in her side; and our poets of to-day might observe that he did not mean that the poet had neither sex, but both. Or, if we may shift our ground a little and return to a simpler form of double personality, there are Browning's well-known verses at the end of his "*Men and Women*," telling how Raphael made a century of sonnets, and Dante once prepared to paint an angel, because, as the poet says:—

"God be thanked, the meanest of His creatures  
Boasts two soul-sides, one to face the world with,  
One to show a woman when he loves her."

Well, during the last twelve years of his life, William Sharp at intervals showed that other side of his soul also to the world at large, but, deliberately and rightly, from the vantage ground of concealment and under a feminine name. So only it was possible for the journalistic critic, the biographer, and rather cynical novelist, to bestow on us glimpses of that Celtic vision which hangs, not only over Hebridean seas, but as a rainbow in the heart. For in that vision dwells the spirit of Dana—the tender voice calling "*Away*"—of whom "*A. E.*," himself a twofold soul, has written:—

"And I weave  
My spells at evening, folding with dim caroes,  
Aerial arms and twilight dropping hair,  
The lonely wanderer by wood or shore,  
Till, filled with some deep tenderness he yields,  
Feeling in dreams for the dear mother heart  
He knew, ere he forsook the starry way."

Swinburne's claim to a bi-sexual nature in poets, Browning's insistence on the two soul-sides of the meanest creature, William Sharp's double personality, of which one-half was so sluggish to awaken till the right voice called—what are they but evidences of the everlasting protest of man against the limitations that hunger, family, habits, reputation, time, and space combine to press upon him? The soul is conscious of infinite capacity, if not of infinite duration, and, to put the thing on its lowest terms, breathes there a man with soul so dead who has never said to himself that he could direct the affairs of the State incomparably better than the Cabinet does?

#### CLIMATE ON THE STAGE.

THE Sicilians are back again in town, and once more the South invades our latitudes with the Spring. One listens to their revelation, amazed only that gesture and tone can mock geography with a magic so resistless. A man can bring a climate with him by a turn of his wrist, and bridge the seas by his strides. How trivial and mechanical seems the art of the stage craftsman when one brings it to this test. The scent of the orange groves made the theatre fragrant. The bare purple hills rose up in their volcanic majesty above the waters of Charybdis. There was a background of Norman churches and Greek ruins. The sky was a pitiless blue, and the cactus itself gasped for water to the lizard in its shade. Carabinieri lounged in the black shadows of the wine-shop, and the pomp of the Host went through the narrow streets. Beyond the walls one could hear the chorus of the peasant girls at the wine-press, and across the waters came the faint music of the fisher's song. And all of this was sheer illusion. Close your ears and gaze through the blinkers of common sense upon the

boards of the stage. There is nothing of all this there. A big bare room, a few oaken chairs, a table, a cupboard, and walls of yellow plaster—these are the orange groves, the Norman churches, the Greek ruins, the brazen sky, the cactus, and the wine-press. It might have been a room in an Irish or a German farm-house. It was the voices, the gestures, the passions of the actors that made the South. An English manager would have supplied the omissions. He would have daubed his stage with local color, with obsolete costumes, with dazzling scenery, with all the apparatus of the unusual and the picturesque. In the end, he would have succeeded only in creating a scene more northern than Piccadilly, more Britannic than the Bank. The more nearly he reproduced the externals of a Sicilian landscape, the more completely would he have satisfied the Protestant conscience, and expressed the temperament of the climate where man survives only by taking thought of the morrow.

To insist on the intensity and the passion of this Sicilian acting, is to tell only half the truth about it. There are Northern actors who reach, in moments of climax, an expression of emotion hardly less concentrated and vehement. There are no strange notes in the Sicilian voice. Its cries, its sobs, its shouts of rage, analyse them one by one, and they are human rather than Southern. For mere vehemence, if that were admirable, there are tenth-rate performers in English melodrama who might, by sheer physical effort, vie with them and outclass them. One begins to understand their rare appeal when one realises that they have no organs of expression. Their whole physique is such an organ. Other actors can control the voice and make of the face a mobile mask. With them the feet are as dramatic as the hands. They move as in a dance. They act with their shoulders; they act with their knees. The very lines of their sombre, commonplace clothing seem to drape themselves into a rendering of passion. And in all this there is nothing calculated or intended. It is because the whole body has learned in a climate of abandonment and unreserve to make itself a vehicle of the life within, that its gestures and motions seem on the stage to be so wholly natural and convincing. The Northern actor works with a dim pastel medium. He mixes all his colors with white. He renders his emotional landscapes through an atmospheric haze. On pain of deviating from realism, at the risk of straying into melodrama, he can rarely express, save in the crisis of strain and self-forgetfulness, an entirely direct emotion. A fog of reserve hangs about every tone. A habit of self-restraint and self-criticism hampers every gesture. His characters, even the most simple and ingenuous, are self-conscious beings, who at every step are aware of themselves and aware of their fellows. Their social existence is founded on a rule of concealment. The revelation is the exception, the expression of emotion comes only as a climax. In this orchestra the strings are always muted, until circumstance clears the artifice away and dictates the audacious fortissimo. The art of the Northern stage is a thing of hints and suggestions. It creates its effects by contrast to this accepted reserve which its characters wear like a suit of mail. Its passions force their way painfully through a crust. Its declarations rend a curtain of silence. One hears the tearing of the curtain as the cry breaks through it; one sees the lifting of the mute as the strings vibrate at last with full and unimpeded tones. In this Sicilian acting there are none of these conventions and restraints to overcome. There is no background of silence; there is no habit of reserve. The voice which rings so sonorous in a moment of passion has never veiled itself in daily life.

The play in this Sicilian theatre is emphatically not "the thing." It is only a native dance tune which enables the actors to go through their steps. "*Omerta*" turns on the release of Saru, a simple Sicilian artisan, after serving a term of fifteen years' imprisonment for a murder done by another, a certain Don Toto. He returns to find Toto the master of his mortgaged home, and the husband of the girl he loved. The island code

of honor forbids him to divulge the truth that Toto was the guilty man. But in a tense scene he brings him to an avowal, only to fall shortly afterwards by the murderer's revolver, leaving to his boy brother the duty of revenge "so soon as he shall be eighteen." It is a simple framework for a village tragedy, unpretending in its thinking and its structure. Direct emotions do not make for subtle psychology or for interesting complications. But from the first entry of Cavaliere Grasso among the peasant actors, the bare scene becomes a whirlpool of vitality. It is an event, it is a great experience, to see him fling his arms about the slight form of his white-haired mother. How pale seem our northern suggestions, how ghostly our northern emotions beside this volcano of tenderness and passion! It is a revelation which makes us seem absent-minded in our most exalted moments. Those knees which abandon themselves to the descent, those hands which caress the old head with a motion so large and so generous, the robust, vigorous body which somehow renders the man through the clothes, those cries almost animal in their simplicity and their terrible intensity—how they concentrated the suffering and the longing of the fifteen years of an unmerited prison, "counted minute by minute"! The amazing performance, so exotic yet so natural, ran its course. It never seemed foreign, and that was its triumph. Its effect on the English spectator was rather to make him seem a foreigner to himself. These were the natural gestures; these were the primitive tones. So, one thought, should we have spoken, if a harsh climate had not frozen our blood, benumbed our tongues, and paralysed our limbs. It was like a return from dream to waking. The mist of reserve and self-consciousness fell away. The clothes of convention were stripped from the mind as it listened, until it could believe that this was its unsophisticated shape which talked a Sicilian *patois* in a strange, yet so natural, environment. Even more astonishing was the scene in which Grasso at last convinced his doubting mother of his innocence. He did not argue. He swore. He knelt on the ground. He asserted. He daubed a cross on a stone with his paint-brush, as though the action were the most instinctive of gestures. He heaped upon her a whole dazzling rainbow of flowers. So swift, so volcanic was the pantomime that we could not describe it; we could barely see it. One disentangled here and there a familiar word in the *patois*. One followed with dazzled eyes the rapid movements of the great supple body. One heard with awe the whirlwind of passion which swept away the doubts of years. How it happened one hardly knew, but one realised that in that heat no scepticism could survive. A temperature was reached at which no lie could live. That was "the nature and meaning" of the oath. Its words passed over unheeded. One thought not at all of the vengeance of God, or of the penalty for perjury. We only saw a man in a white heat, and instinctively we knew that no guilty conscience could heap the fuel of that furnace.

Grasso was the pervading presence of the play. One felt his presence even when he was off the stage. He dwarfed his fellows when he was on it. Yet, as an artistic performance Signor Viscuso's acting of Don Toto was a supremely masterly achievement. Conceive for a moment that you have been cast for this astonishing rôle. You are a man who has committed a murder, and allowed another to endure for it fifteen years of prison, while you enjoyed his house and possessed the woman he had loved. What experience, what tradition would enable you to play the part? You might try to render it plausible by a sinister deliberation, a calculating villainy, a cold and self-contained egoism. Signor Viscuso made his Don Toto possible by the simple process of making him a very vital, but a very ordinary, Sicilian. One realised his natural gusto in the good things of life. The whole man appeared in his eating of a salad, noisily, greedily, with speechless concentration. He was flamboyant in his clothes, expansive in his affection, confident and masterful in his security. One understood the type. For him the salad, and the house, the wife, and his respectable liberty, were the realities and

the only realities of life. He was unscrupulous simply because these plain good things were all he wanted. He was, in his own way, as natural an expression of the Sicilian absence of self-criticism and self-consciousness as the more social passions which Grasso rendered. The acting which created him was a revelation to the more complicated Northern mind. Our villains are a Southern tradition to which we have lost the key. Shakespeare pillaged Italian stories, and forgot to steal the psychology with the plot. It is the Southern joy of life, its relish of the obvious external good things of life, which makes the Southern villain possible, human, and tolerable.

One turns away from these plays with a certain envy—the envy with which one watches the gambols of a kitten or the games of a child. "Counted minute by minute," the phrase, banal and natural as it was, gave the whole atmosphere of Sicily. Where else does the human mind count on that scale? Our clocks reckon also the hours. To live minute by minute, to see nothing before and nothing behind, to be all in the present, to be whole at each vital throbbing of the pulse—that is the formula of this entire, this passionate life. To see these plays is to take one's seat in a time-machine more miraculous than that of Mr. Wells. It annihilates the past, it extirpates the future. It makes the moment the intense, the sole, reality.

#### A CITY OF SUNSHINE.

WE have never seen it except in sunshine; and it is as a sunlit city that it remains in memory. The very walls and old crumbling churches seem as if compounded of dust and sunshine, brown dust with a kind of rosy glow, as if centuries of sunlight had somehow become imprisoned there, and transfigured and glorified the crumbling clay. This, and the yellow gold in the air, like golden rain falling, gives, especially in the late afternoon, an impression of richness and delicacy. Assisi might seem to lie as the ruin of some golden city—the *El Dorado* of men's dreams. Behind, rises a high, brown hill, purple at sunset. The roofs and walls and church towers stretch upward to an old brown castle. Before it, white winding lanes lead down into the huge plain of Umbria, a vast sea of green, now in springtime; with the young corn growing so quickly in a night, and new shoots upon the vines. To-day, even in this early March weather, the sun shines down from an unclouded sky: calling out the riches of the earth, in preparation for another harvest. And at night, never clouded with the opaque darkness of less kindly Northern lands, there is manifest a kind of physical sense of great distance, of a land whose boundaries are situate far away. Small cities smoulder and burn as the fireflies at one's feet: with a long record of achievement behind them, and names that are like a song.

And if the first impression is of sunshine, the second is of repose. The repose is of a city that is not dead, but sleepeth. Some of these small passionate hill towns—Perugia, for example, or Siena, over there westward in Tuscany—find themselves animated by a new material prosperity: have awoken and stand upright, with the resurrection of Italy. Others—Spello, Spoleto, San Gimignano—stand to-day as museums or ancient monuments, beautiful in decay, with arch and stone and tower telling of once violent life, all as dead as the temples of Karnak or the tombs of Thebes. Assisi is as quiet as any of them. The streets which wind white between brown walls studded with adventurous plants lodged in their crevices, the great grass-grown space beneath the shadow of the castle, the walled gardens over whose boundaries trail dog-roses and hawthorn and sweet-scented plants, the frequent brown, deserted churches—all these belong to the evidence of the vanishing of that hot, sensitive life which once surged through those historic ways. A barefoot child singing in the sunshine, the passing of occasional veiled figures, white oxen returning from their labor, strike the silence suddenly in a city where the gardens have invaded the ancient boundaries and the work of the peasant occupies the heart of the town. Yet none but the incurious can

fail to be conscious of a kind of Life, brooding; the presence, in an air charged with great memories, of a sleep which will one day be awakened.

We doubt if that awakening will come from wealth or trade, or even through the enlargement of those still modest hotels which house the ever-increasing horde of cosmopolitan visitors. Nor have we much hope here of the activity of those "Socialists," "Christian" or "Democratic," whose placards, shouting for action, incongruously bedaub the walls of so many deserted streets. Yet the city has something in it of the power of survival, some abiding secret—and that of the soul—to which man may one day listen, after the fever of progress has spent its forces. "Blessed be thou of the Lord, O City, faithful to God"—so Francis had blest it at the last, "because through thee many souls shall be saved. The servants of the Most High shall dwell within thy walls, and many of thy children shall be chosen for the kingdom of heaven."

How many souls are saved of the multitudes of visitors which from time to time throng its streets is a matter of conjecture. The sleeping city is a guardian of artistic treasure, as well as a memorial of the dead. The pictures and the story lure out an increasing crowd in this spring weather from the great hotels of Florence. They gaze with crooked necks and in some bodily discomfort at the smoky Giotto Frescoes on the roof of the lower Church, emerging, blinking in the sunshine, to purchase photographs of the marriage of Francis and Poverty. They glance hastily at the dead face of St. Clare at Santa Chiara, wondering that the body should be preserved so well for so many centuries. They discuss the latest, rather tedious, jargon of the day—"St. Francis and the twentieth century," "The message of St. Francis to America," "St. Francis as an advocate of the True, the Beautiful, and the Good"—all the windy rhetoric which exhibits Francis as a kindly suburban moralist who wished children and animals to be happy. They gain, we think, some satisfaction—not entirely evanescent—from the majesty of those silent, defiant churches, from the magnificence of an Umbrian springtime. And some of them learn here that the twentieth century is not the thirteenth, made respectable, frock-coated, and rational, but is moved by other impulses, towards altogether divergent ends.

And in high summer when the tourists have been deflected into Switzerland or the Italian lakes, another crowd climbs these steep, winding streets as the peasant world pays its annual tribute to the shrine of the poor man's friend. And here is all color, exuberance, emotion, with the madness which to some appears as inspiration, to others as an hysteria: men and women kissing the walls of the Portiuncula, slithering flat on their faces up the floor of the great Degli Angeli Church, licking the ground, tearing themselves to pieces in expiation of their sins. They, too, perhaps are begging, rather than praying, often with strong crying and tears and passionate, outstretched hands; for the giving of a child, or the cure of love, or the averting of the consequences of past sins. They will return tranquil to all the fields of Italy, with memories of the little brown town and the great church in the valley below; with prayers, for the most part, not unsatisfied.

He loved the sunlight; and, blind and self-tortured, composed his hymn to the Sun. Near the hut under the oak trees where now stands that huge Renaissance Church, he asked his brethren to grow not only food but flowers; "not only to cultivate vegetables, but to leave a little portion for those plants which in due time would bring forth brother flowers, for the love of Him who is called flower of the field and lily of the valley." He cast out and utterly destroyed the devils which lurked in the clefts of the hills or wandered in winter round the habitations of men. Rejoicing in renunciation of all, he could inspire his followers with that jocund spirit which laughs while it inspires, and welcoming all tribulation finds no need of forgiveness. A great happiness—distilled from that sunshine—speaks from every line of those early Franciscan records. In abandonment of all that life demands, these men found themselves "clothed with the heavens and crowned with the stars."

Up in the Carceri, in the great rift stabbed through the rock of Subasio, Francis in the summer night left his cell to essay competition with the birds, in songs to the praise of God; was forced to confess, at break of day, the victory of Brother Nightingale. And in this mountain solitude his memory remains to-day most fragrant and visible. The road to it winds upward through cornfields and olives, a track along the slopes of the Apennines, until, behind, Assisi appears as a kind of dream city, the little hill town which is the established centre of all the romance of childhood. Below stretches all Umbria; sweet-scented flowers, butterflies flitting from them, violets and yellow orchids, accompany the traveller in his path above that glittering plain. Suddenly the road turns swiftly into the heart of the hills. In the midst of a deep wood, with a gigantic ravine spanned by a single arch of crumbling stone, there nestles the tiniest of all model convents which mortal man has seen. It is like the house, suddenly discovered, of the Little Men of the forest; a little dining-room where one can just stand upright; a little kitchen, with blackened open fire; tiny bedrooms, approached by ladders; caves beneath, where once St. Francis lay; the whole giving an impression of simplicity and of age. It is the kind of house which children delight in, the house which grown-up children might build; with the sheer mountain above them, topped by a tiny slit of sky; the arch of the friendly trees peeping in at their windows; and of the outer world nothing but a narrow glimpse of a vast plain, seen as from a window cut in the rock, now swept by rain and oppressed with the cold, now all golden under the benignant sun.

You must come with acceptance, not with criticism; and acceptance is the best lesson you can carry away from it all. You must not complain, with whole generations, that Elias, amid the indignation of the older order, raised in memory of the "little poor man of Assisi" the most wonderful Church of Christendom. You must not complain that the Portiuncula, instead of being (as you would desire it) still solitary amid its oak trees, is now enclosed in a garish, unbeautiful church, and bedaubed with frescoes of no artistic value. You must not complain of the tourists who rapidly elbow you aside, or the pilgrims who gaze at you with anger as an unbeliever. You must not even complain of the chatter and gush which has accompanied recent revived interest in the Franciscan legend. For here are sunshine and repose; heroic memories, present unfading beauty; a challenge, an acceptance, a regret.

## Present-Day Problems.

"GENTLES, LET US REST!"\*

(A PAPER ON THE POSITION OF WOMEN.)

A MAN asked to define the essential characteristics of a gentleman—using the term in its widest sense—would presumably reply: The will to put himself in the place of others; the horror of forcing others into positions from which he himself would recoil; the power to do what seems to him right without considering what others may say or think.

There is need just now of aid from these principles of gentility in a question of some importance—the future position of women.

The ground facts of difference between the sexes, no one is likely to deny:

Women are not, and in human probability never will be, physically, as strong as men.

Men are not, nor ever will be, mothers.

Women are not, and never should be, warriors.

To these ground facts of difference are commonly added in argument, many others of more debatable character. But it is beside the purpose of this paper to enquire whether women have as much political sense or

\* Adam Lindsay Gordon.

aptitude as men, whether a woman has ever produced a masterpiece of music, whether the brain of a woman ever weighed as much as the brain of Cuvier or Turgenev.

This paper designs to set forth one cardinal and overmastering consideration, in comparison with which all the other considerations affecting the question seem to this writer but as the little stars to the full moon.

In the lives of all nations there come moments when an idea, hitherto vaguely, almost unconsciously, held, assumes sculptured shape, and is manifestly felt to be of vital significance to a large, important, and steadily increasing section of the community. At such moments a spectre has begun to haunt the national house—a ghost which cannot be laid till it has received quietus.

Such a ghost now infests our home.

The full emancipation of women is an idea long vaguely held, but only in the last half-century formulated and pressed forward with real force and conviction, not only by women but by men. Of this full emancipation of women, the political vote is assuredly not, as is rather commonly supposed in a land of party politics, the be-all and end-all; it is a symbol, whose practical importance—though considerable—is as nothing beside the fulfilment of the idea which it symbolises.

For, the full emancipation of women is surely at this moment the prime demand that Equity is making of us; and the fulfilment of divine demand carries with it such subtle and warm benefit to the national heart as makes pale all mere political privilege. Above all the clamor of this suit, the serene advocacy of Equity can always be heard by whomsoever is disposed to listen.

No man can go apart, out of reach of talk, quietly to watch the sky, and contemplate all that happens thereunder, without the certainty coming to him of the existence of a Supreme Principle, overlordling what is known as Nature.

Many good words, and much good breath, are spent in turn on the explication of the Will to Power, and the Will to Love, as the animating principles of the Universe; but these are, rather, correlative half-truths, whose rivalry is surely stilled and reconciled in a yet higher principle, the Will to Harmony, to Balance, to Equity—a supreme adjustment, or harmonising power, present wherever a man turns; by which, in fact, he is conditioned, for he can no more conceive with his mental apparatus, of a Universe, without a Will to Balance holding it together, than he can conceive the opposite of the axiom, "*Ex nihilo nihil fit*." There is assuredly no thought so staggering as that, if a blade of grass or the energy contained within a single emotion were—not transmuted—but *withdrawn* from the Universe, that Universe would crumble in our imaginations to thin air.

Now social and political justice emanates slowly, with infinite labor, from our dim consciousness of this serene and overlordling principle. There would seem, for example, no fundamental reason why limits should ever have been put to autocracy, the open ballot destroyed, slavery abolished, save that these things came to be regarded as inequitable. In all such cases, before reaching the point of action, the Society of the day puts forward practical reasons, being, so to speak, unaware of its own sense of divinity. But, underneath all the seeming matter-of-factness of political and social movements, the spirit of Equity is guiding those movements, subtly, unconsciously, a compelling hand quietly pushing humanity onward, ever unseen save in the rare minutes when the spirits of men glow and light up, and things are beheld for a moment as they are. The history of a nation's spiritual development is but the tale of its wistful groping towards the provision of a machinery of State, which shall, as nearly as may be, accord with the demand of this spirit of Equity. Society, worthy of the name, is ever secretly shaping around it a temple, within which all the natural weaknesses and limitations of the dwellers shall be, not exploited and emphasised, but to the utmost levelled away and minimised. It is ever secretly providing for itself a roof under which

there shall be the fullest and fairest play for all human energies, however unequal.

The destinies of mankind are seen to be guided, very slowly, by something more coherent than political opportunity; shaped steadily in a given direction, towards the completion of that temple of justice. There is no other way of explaining the growth of man from the cave-dweller to his present case. And this slow spiritual shaping proceeds alongside and in spite of the workings of the twin bodily agents, force and expediency. Social and political growth is, in fact, a process of evolution, controlled, directed, spiritualised by the supreme principle of Equity.

This is to state no crazy creed, that because equality is mathematically admirable, equality should at all times and in all places forthwith obtain. Equality, balance, is a dream, the greatest of all visions, the beloved star—ever to be worshipped, never quite reached. And the long road towards it travels the illimitable land of compromise. It would have been futile, as it was in fact impossible, to liberate slaves, when the consciousness of the injustice of slavery was present only in a few abnormal minds, and incommunicable by them to the mind of the surrounding society of the time. The process is slow and steady. Equity well knows that there is a time for Her, as for all other things. She is like the brain, saying to the limbs and senses: You are full of queer ways. It is for me to think out gradually the best rule of life, under which you must get on as you can, the Devil taking the hindmost; but from trying to devise this scheme of perfection I may not, nor ever shall, rest.

Social and political justice, then, advances by fits and starts, through ideas—children of the one great idea of Harmony—which are suggested now by one, now by another, section or phase of national life. The business is like the construction and shaping of a work of art. For an artist is ever receiving vague impressions from people unconsciously observed, from feelings unconsciously experienced, till in good time he discovers that he has an idea. This idea is but a generalisation or harmonious conception derived subconsciously from these vague impressions. Being moved to embody that idea, he at once begins groping back to, and gathering in, those very types and experiences from which he derived this general notion, in order adequately to shape the vehicle—his picture, his poem, his novel—which shall carry his idea forth to the world.

So in social and political progress. The exigencies and inequalities of existing social life produce a crop of impressions on certain receptive minds, which suddenly burst into flower in the form of ideas. The minds in which these abstractions or ideas have flowered, seek then to burgeon them forth, and their method of doing so is to bring to public notice those exigencies and inequalities which were the original fuel of their ideas. In this way is the seed of an idea spread amongst a community. But wherever the seed of an idea falls, it has to struggle up through layers of prejudice, to overcome the rule of force and expediency; and if this idea, this generalisation from social exigencies or inequalities, be false, retrograde, or distorted, it withers and dies during the struggle. If, on the other hand, it be true, consonant with the future, and of fair promise, it holds fast and spreads.

Now, one may very justly say that this is all a platitudinal explanation of the crude process of social and political development, and that in taking a given idea such as the full emancipation of women, the fight only begins to rage round the question whether that idea is in fact holding fast and spreading, and, if holding fast and spreading, whether the community is, or is not yet, sufficiently permeated with the idea to be safely entrusted with its fulfilment. The fact has, nevertheless, to be borne in mind, that, if this idea can be proved to be holding fast and spreading, it must be an idea emanating from the root divinity in things, from the overmastering principle of Equity, and sure of ultimate fulfilment; and, the only question will then be, exactly how long the rule of expediency and force may advisably postpone its fulfilment.

Now, in order to discover whether the idea of the

full emancipation of women is in accord with the great principle of Equity, it will be necessary, first, to show the present inferiority of woman's political and social position; then, to consider the essential reason of that inferiority; and, thirdly, to see whether the facts and figures of the movement towards the removal of that inferiority, clearly prove that the idea has long been holding fast and spreading.

To show, however, that the present political and social position of women is not equal to that of men, it will surely suffice to state two admitted facts: Women have not the political vote. Women, who can be divorced for one offence, must, before they obtain divorce, prove two kinds of offence against their husbands.

And to ascertain the essential reason of this present inferiority, we need hardly go beyond the ground facts of difference between men and women already mentioned:—

Women are not physically as strong as men.

Men are never mothers.

Women are not warriors.

From these ground facts readily admitted by all, the reason for the present inferiority of women's position emerges clear and unmistakable: *Women are weaker than men.* They are weaker because they are not so physically strong; they are weaker because they have to bear and to rear children; they are weaker because they are unarmed. There is no getting away from it, they are weaker; and one cannot doubt for a moment that their inferior position is due to this weakness. But—so runs an immemorial argument—however equal their opportunities might be, women will never be as strong as men. Why then, for sentimental reasons, disturb the present order of things, why equalise those opportunities? This is the plea which was used before married women were allowed separate property, before the decision in *Regina versus Jackson*, which forbade a husband to lock his wife up. The argument, in fact, of expediency and force.

Now there are no finer statements of the case for the full emancipation of women than Mill's "Subjection of Women," and a pamphlet entitled: "Homo Sum; being a letter from an Anthropologist to an Anti-Suffragist." The reasonings in the former work are too well-known, but to the main thesis of "Homo Sum" allusion must here be made. The most common, perhaps most telling, plea against raising the social and political status of women to a level with that of men, is this: Men and women are already equal, but in separate spheres of activity. The difference between their physical conformation and functions underlies everything in the lives of both. The province and supremacy of women are in the home; the province and supremacy of men in the State. Why seek to alter what Nature has ordained? A plea, in fact, which glorifies *sex quâ sex*.

But the writer of "Homo Sum" is at pains to show that "the splendid and vital instinct of sex" with all its "singular power of interpenetrating and reinforcing other energies" is in essence egotistic, exclusive, anti-social; and that, besides and beyond being men and women, we are all human beings. "The whole woman's movement," the writer says, "is just the learning of that lesson. It is not an attempt to arrogate man's prerogative of manhood; it is not even an attempt to assert and emphasize woman's privilege of womanhood; it is simply the demand that in the life of woman, as in the life of man, space and liberty shall be found for a thing bigger than either manhood or womanhood—for humanity."

The splendid instinct of sex—for all its universality, for all that through and by it life is perpetuated, for all its power of bringing delight, and of revealing the heights and depths of human emotion—is still in its essence an agent of the rule of force, for we cannot but perceive that there is in both men and women something more exalted and impersonal, akin to the supreme principle of Equity, to the divinity in things; and that this something keeps men and women together as strongly, as inevitably, as sex keeps them apart. What is all the effort of civilisation but the gradual fortifying

of that higher part of us, the exaltation of the principle of justice; the chaining of the principle of force? The full emancipation of women would be but a symbol of this effort of civilisation; a reassuring sign that this nation was still serving humanity, still trying to be gentle and just. For if it has ceased to serve humanity, we must surely pray that the waters may rise over this island, and that she may go down all standing!

JOHN GALSWORTHY.

(To be concluded.)

## Letters from Abroad.

### THE FRENCH ADMINISTRATIVE SCANDALS.

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR,—The debate in the Chamber on the liquidation scandals ended last night in a vote of confidence in the Government carried by an overwhelming majority against a minority composed of forty-one Socialists, fourteen Radicals, one deputy of the Centre, and twenty-three deputies of the Right. There were 116 abstentions, composed of nearly all the Centre, thirty-nine deputies of the Right, eleven Socialists, seventeen of the other groups of the Left, and the Abbé Lemire, who belongs to no group. On Monday night old Parliamentary hands considered that things looked bad for the Government. M. Barthou's speech, with its startling admissions, unaccompanied by any satisfactory guarantees for the future, had created a feeling of discomfort which might well have wreaked itself on the Government, had not the latter hurriedly adjourned the debate. As has so often happened, a night's reflection and M. Briand's persuasive eloquence changed the situation.

It would be hard for a reader of M. Briand's speech to understand its effect. He declared, of course, that the Government had done all its duty, and would continue to do it; but so did M. Barthou; and M. Briand was not much more explicit as to details. But it is necessary to hear M. Briand to understand his influence on the Chamber; it is not so much what he says as the way in which he says it. Moreover, a change of Government on the eve of the General Election is not a prospect that appeals to the average deputy, and the Conservatives of the Left knew that the alternative to the Briand Cabinet was a Cabinet headed or influenced by M. Combes. As M. Combes is the person mainly responsible for the exposure of the liquidators, the President of the Republic could hardly have sent for anyone else. A Combes Cabinet, or a Cabinet formed on M. Combes' advice, would mean an alliance with the Socialists, and Socialism is what the Conservatives of the Left dread more than anything else. The cynic cannot but chuckle at the fate which makes them look to the former apostle of the general strike to save them from the Social Revolution.

It cannot be said that the debate has revived the tarnished prestige of the Radical Party. The speaker who best represented public opinion was M. Jaurès; he rose, as he always does on these occasions, above personalities and party jealousies and lobby intrigues, and put the matter clearly and directly. He was not answered. We do not yet know why, although the Senatorial Commission, of which M. Combes is Chairman, drew the attention of the Government a year ago to the irregularities of M. Lecouturier, that gentleman still holds his position as a liquidator. We do not yet know why M. Lemarquis, who was lost in admiration of M. Duez's methods of book-keeping, is still unrevoked. We do not yet know why M. Duez himself continued so long to practise with impunity that ingenuity in cooking accounts which provoked M. Lemarquis' admiration.

We do know that M. Lecouturier is the brother-in-law of M. Bunau-Varilla, proprietor of the "Matin," a paper which has supported M. Clemenceau and M. Briand as consistently as it opposed M. Combes. We also know that M. Millerand, now Minister of Public Works, maintained excellent relations with M. Lecouturier, which brought him and his clerks (the proportion

allotted to the clerks is not stated) £3,208 in legal fees; that M. Millerand also contributed a preface to a work of M. Duez on the practical application of the Law of 1901 as it applied to the Congregations, a work which might have been, but apparently was not, extremely entertaining. We know a good many other things of this kind which, although they certainly do not prove any guilty complicity, require explanation. A young Socialist-Radical deputy, M. Binet, had the courage to raise the question of M. Millerand's relations with the liquidators. The members of the Government retired to consider the matter (a somewhat strange proceeding), and, when they returned, M. Briand, being challenged by M. Jaurès, declared that M. Millerand was his friend whom he would never desert, and M. Millerand, on being further pressed by M. Binet, said that he disdained the latter's insults. All of which is touching and dignified, but leaves us where we were. It must at least be admitted that M. Binet had some justification for his view that an ex-Minister who has every prospect of holding office again would be wise to abstain from acting as an advocate in matters arising out of laws that he has helped to make.

M. Binet's courage was not shared by most of his colleagues; the French Radical Party is not just now in a robust condition. M. Binet spoke the truth when he said that he expressed the opinions of many other Radicals; it is quite certain that the explanations of the Government are not generally regarded as satisfactory. Yet only thirteen Radicals accompanied M. Binet into the division lobby against the Government, and the same mystic number had the courage to abstain. It is not the fact that the Government remains in office that will discredit the Radical Party in the country, but the fact that the vote of last night did not express the convictions of the voters. The record of the majority in the expiring Parliament is already far from brilliant. The Senate, in which there is, after all, a Radical majority, has hung up the income-tax, mutilated the Ballot Bill, delayed Old Age Pensions until the last moment, and reversed the decision of the Chamber to earmark the new death duties in order to provide for the pensions. Both this and the preceding Ministry are responsible for these dilatory tactics; they have never made a firm stand against the obstruction of the Senate, and the majority in the Chamber has not compelled them to do so. The "Temps" is now chuckling, perhaps with reason, over the possibility that there will not be time to carry the Pensions Bill before the elections. To sum up, the legislative record of the last four years is practically blank.

The gravity of the present scandal lies in the fact that it reveals the rottenness of a whole section of the French judicial system. M. Duez, M. Lecouturier, and M. Ménage belong to a body of quasi-officials who perform the functions performed in England by official receivers, but who are much more irresponsible and much less easily called to account. They are nominated by the Court, and are responsible to the Court, but the case of Duez shows that the control of the Court over their proceedings is extremely lax. Duez seems to have embezzled not only £200,000 or so from the sequestered property of the Congregations, but also some £40,000 from private fortunes which he had to administer. Among the functions of a judicial liquidator is that of acting as trustee for a person placed under a *conseil judiciaire*, a position which must afford ample opportunity for gentlemen so ingenious as M. Duez, who seems to have availed himself of it on more than one occasion. According to Duez himself, he has practised his depredations for years, and began his career by helping himself to £20,000 belonging to his former employer, M. Imbert, also a judicial liquidator; since then, as he naively remarked, he has always been in arrears. Not one of the least amazing circumstances in this amazing case is the indignant denial of M. Imbert that any such sum was stolen from him, to which Duez replied that, as M. Imbert knew nothing about his own books, the trifling loss escaped him. To a judicial liquidator £20,000 more or less is evidently a bagatelle.

It was on M. Imbert's strong recommendation that Duez was appointed one of the liquidators of the Congregations; the appointments of M. Lecouturier and M. Ménage were made, according to M. Barthou, on the recommendation of M. Vallé, who at that time held M. Barthou's present office of Minister of Justice. It is now plain that it would have been better to entrust the liquidation of the Congregations to the *administration des domaines*, that is to say, to Government officials, as M. Prache, a deputy of the Right, proposed in 1904; but the system of judicial liquidation was chosen precisely because the judicial liquidators are free from Government control and under the direct court. The result shows that M. Barthou did not go too far when he said that there is "quelque chose de gangrené dans notre organisation judiciaire."

One of the most startling circumstances in the whole affair is the way in which Duez seems to have been almost protected by the Court which ought to have called him to account. It was only after great pressure from the Government that it consented to deprive him of his functions, and only when the Senatorial Commission had dragged the scandal to light that it arrested him. A horde of lawyers battered on the endless lawsuits that the liquidations involved, and the fees paid to them have been out of all proportion to their services; judicial liquidators are known as the most generous of clients. The decision of the Grenoble Court in the case of the Grande Chartreuse is not more creditable to the legal profession. The story of the complicated three-cornered negotiations between M. Lecouturier, M. Cusenier, and M. Marnier is too long to tell here. The net result was that M. Lecouturier sold the right to make the liqueur to M. Cusenier for 500,000 francs, and that M. Marnier was condemned to pay two-and-a-half million francs for breach of contract. As M. Jaurès said last night, supposing that M. Marnier can pay the damages, the State will obtain as the purchase price 500,000 francs from the man who possesses the right, and five times as much from the man who gets nothing. The circumstances in which M. Lecouturier was (apparently) let in for selling the right to M. Cusenier, demonstrate, if not complicity, at least grave incapacity, and the facts suggest that M. Marnier was a victim.

The facts brought to the notice of the senatorial commission also suggest grave irregularities in the matter of sales by private agreement. It is asserted that many of these sales were made for ridiculous sums to men or syndicates of straw representing the Congregations, and that liquidators were recompensed for their complaisance. In other cases liquidators are accused of corrupt arrangements with descendants of benefactors of the Congregations, and, in fact, of obtaining illicit commissions and profits in various ways on the transactions entrusted to them. The evidence before the senatorial commission supports these accusations, and the best that a member of the commission could say of M. Ménage was that he was "the least dishonest of the three."

It is felt that, although the Government had no direct control over the liquidators, it cannot be absolved of all responsibility for the prolonged continuance of such practices. If the Courts refused to do their duty, Parliament could have been consulted earlier. It now remains to redress the mischief as far as possible. M. Briand proposes to pass before the elections a measure assimilating the procedure in the liquidations to those of the liquidations resulting from the Separation Law, which have been accomplished with small expense and without the slightest suspicion of malpractices. This will involve the substitution of administrative for judicial liquidators. M. Barthou has promised that appeals shall be lodged against all suspicious sales by private contract, and the Government is pledged to probe the whole matter to the roots and take the necessary measures against the guilty persons. But the country will not be satisfied unless the scandal results, as M. Barthou has promised that it shall, in a complete reform of the system of judicial liquidation.—Yours, &c.,

R. E. D.

Paris, March 16th, 1910.

## Letters to the Editor.

### THE "ELEKTRA" OF STRAUSS AND HOFFMANSTAHL.

To the Editor of THE NATION

SIR,—It is our good fortune to have produced in Professor Gilbert Murray a writer and scholar able to raise the Electra of Euripides from the dead and make it a living possession for us. Thanks to him, we know the poem as if it were an English one. But nothing Professor Murray can do can ever make us feel quite as the Electra of Euripides felt about her mother's neglect to bury her father properly after murdering him. A heroine who feels that to commit murder, even husband murder, is a thing that might happen to anybody, but that to deny the victim a proper funeral is an outrage so unspeakable that it becomes her plain filial duty to murder her mother in expiation, is outside that touch of nature that makes all the ages akin: she is really too early-Victorian. To us she is more unnatural than Clytemnestra or Aegistheus; and, in the end, we pity them and secretly shrink from their slayers. What Hoffmanstahl and Strauss have done is to take Clytemnestra and Aegistheus, and by identifying them with everything that is evil and cruel, with all that needs must hate the highest when it sees it, with hideous domination and coercion of the higher by the baser, with the murderous rage in which the lust for a lifetime of orgiastic pleasure turns on its slaves in the torture of its disappointment and the sleepless horror and misery of its neurasthenia, to so rouse in us an overwhelming flood of wrath against it and ruthless resolution to destroy it, that Electra's vengeance becomes holy to us; and we come to understand how even the gentlest of us could wield the axe of Orestes or twist our firm fingers in the black hair of Clytemnestra to drag back her head and leave her throat open to the stroke.

That was a task hardly possible to an ancient Greek, and not easy even to us who are face to face with the America of the Thaw case, and the European plutocracy of which that case was only a trifling symptom. And that is the task which Hoffmanstahl and Strauss have achieved. Not even in the third scene of "Das Rheingold," or in the Klingsor scenes in "Parsifal," is there such an atmosphere of malignant and cancerous evil as we get here. And that the power with which it is done is not the power of the evil itself, but of the passion that detests and must and finally can destroy that evil, is what makes the work great, and makes us rejoice in its horror.

Whoever understands this, however vaguely, will understand Strauss's music, and why on Saturday night the crowded house burst into frenzied shoutings, not merely of applause, but of strenuous assent and affirmation, as the curtain fell. That the power of conceiving it should occur in the same individual as the technical skill and natural faculty needed to achieve its complete and overwhelming expression in music, is a stroke of the rarest good fortune that can befall a generation of men. I have often said, when asked to state the case against the fools and money changers who are trying to drive us into a war with Germany, that the case consists of the single word, Beethoven. To-day, I should say with equal confidence, Strauss. That we should make war on Strauss and the heroic warfare and aspiration that he represents is treason to humanity. In this music drama Strauss has done for us just what he has done for his own countrymen: he has said for us, with an utterly satisfying force, what all the noblest powers of life within us are clamoring to have said, in protest against and defiance of the omnipresent villainies of our civilisation; and this is the highest achievement of the highest art.

It was interesting to compare our conductor, the gallant Beecham, bringing out the points in Strauss's orchestration, until sometimes the music sounded like a concerto for six drums, with Strauss himself, bringing out the meaning and achieving the purpose of his score so that we forgot that there was an orchestra there at all, and could hear nothing but the conflict and storm of passion. Human emotion is a complex thing: there are moments when our feeling is so

deep and our ecstasy so exalted that the primeval monsters from whom we are evolved wake within us and utter the strange tormented cries of their ancient struggles with the Life Force. All this is in "Elektra"; and under the baton of Strauss the voices of these epochs are kept as distinct in their unity as the parts in a Bach motet. Such colossal counterpoint is a counterpoint of all the ages; not even Beethoven in his last great Mass comprehended so much. The feat is beyond all verbal description: it must be heard and felt; and even then, it seems, you must watch and pray, lest your God should forget you, and leave you to hear only "abominable ugliness and noise," and, on remonstrance, lead you to explain handsomely that Strauss is "vulgar, and stupid, and ugly" only "sometimes," and that this art of his is so "ridiculously easy" that nothing but your own self-respect prevents you from achieving a European reputation by condescending to practise it.

So much has been said of the triumphs of our English singers in "Elektra" that I owe it to Germany to profess my admiration of the noble beauty and power of Frau Fassbender's Elektra. Even if Strauss's work were the wretched thing poor Mr. Newman mistook it for, it would still be worth a visit to Covent Garden to see her wonderful death dance, which was the climax of one of the most perfect examples yet seen in London of how, by beautiful and eloquent gesture, movement, and bearing, a fine artist can make not only her voice, but her body, as much a part of a great music drama as any instrument in the score. The other German artists, notably Frau Bahr Mildenburg, showed great power and accomplishment; but they have received fuller acknowledgment, whereas we should not have gathered from the reports that Frau Fassbender's performance was so extraordinary as it actually was. A deaf man could have watched her with as little sense of privation as a blind man could have listened to her. To those of us who are neither deaf nor blind nor anti-Straussian critics (which is the same thing), she was a superb Elektra.

Whatever may be the merits of the article which gave rise to the present correspondence, it is beyond question that it left the readers of THE NATION without the smallest hint that the occasion was one of any special importance, or that it was at all worth their while to spend time and money in supporting Mr. Beecham's splendid enterprise, and being present on what was, in fact, a historic moment in the history of art in England, such as may not occur again within our lifetime. Many persons may have been, and possibly were, prevented by that article from seizing their opportunity, not because Mr. Newman does not happen to like Strauss's music, but because he belittled the situation by so miscalculating its importance that he did not think it worth even the effort of criticising it, and dismissed it in a notice in which nothing was studied except his deliberate contemptuous insolence to the composer. It would have been an additional insult to Strauss to have waited to hear "Elektra" before protesting, on the plainest grounds of international courtesy and artistic good faith, against such treatment of the man who shares with Rodin the enthusiastic gratitude and admiration of the European republic, one and indivisible, of those who understand the highest art. But now that I have heard "Elektra," I have a new duty to the readers of THE NATION, and that is to take upon me the work Mr. Newman should have done, and put them in possession of the facts.

And now Ernest, "*Triff noch einmal*"!—Yours, &c.,  
G. BERNARD SHAW.

March 17th, 1910.

### THE PROVINCIAL OPERA.

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR,—As a subscriber to "The Ring" performance given in Edinburgh during the past two weeks, I read with deep interest your special article on this notable experiment. I think, however, the writer has failed in as much as he has adopted the superior musical student's platform instead of taking a broad and wide view. It is pure affectation to say "People who have become interested in the later Wagner, in Strauss, in Debussy, in Elgar, and in Bantock, feel no particular yearning to spend an evening over Gounod's

"Faust" or "Tannhauser" or "Lohengrin." Whatever may be the value of the later Wagner and the other composers mentioned, it nevertheless remains true that the operas mentioned are great works of art calling out the highest skill, and if the later compositions destroy a love for these, then I fear all is not right with the new school of musical thought. An opera, a book, a picture which cannot be understood by the majority of ordinary men may be a work of art, but it has failed in the chief object of its creation—to tell something to the race.

The writer also forgets Edinburgh is not a provincial town, but a capital, and has a long and honorable musical history. We have a school of music in our University, and are producing sound musicians. The Scottish Orchestra, which is as good as any orchestra in London, Paris, or Berlin, has for twenty-five years been doing great educational work. This splendid combination under the baton of a great conductor made "The Ring" a success; but how such a combination could be taken round the other large cities is not so easily understood. I believe, however, Edinburgh and Glasgow could combine in having an operatic festival every second or third year, just as at present the Scottish Orchestra serves both cities each winter. I see Mr. Denhof is being asked to repeat the success in the autumn, but I think he will be wise to pause and consider. I believe the present venture will not be a financial success, although the gallery seats were 5s. each and the pit 7s. 6d. each. Cost must be considered, and I do not think there is a public sufficiently large to support this, except occasionally. At least, in Scotland we are not wealthy enough to do it. Edinburgh and Glasgow have the material, and I hope, with your writer, that the work will not drop, but that a public-spirited body of men and women will follow up what Mr. Denhof has so well begun. I would also strongly dissent from the remarks about the Press. The chief organs gave the movement whole-hearted support, and their articles were both good and correct. I do not know which paper it was that blundered, but I can assure the writer the Scottish Press is well informed on musical matters. —Yours, &c.,

EDINBURGH.

March 15th, 1910.

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR,—Your readers in Edinburgh will be interested by your article in this week's issue on the recent performance of Wagner's "Ring." Herr Denhof has made a courageous and auspicious beginning, and it is well that his work should receive adequate recognition—which, as a rule, the Edinburgh Press is unfortunately not well enough instructed to give. But one passage in your article is rather too strongly flavored with Metropolitan contempt. "An orchestra of eighty-two poured out a magnificent flood of tone that must have astonished the provincials, whose previous notions of an operatic orchestra had been derived from what the touring companies have given them." The orchestra in question is, of course, the Scottish Orchestra, which has served Edinburgh and Glasgow for many seasons, and, although it has never, I think, taken part in full operatic performances, has many times included in its programmes various parts of the "Ring" music: so that we "provincials" are not such uninstructed Philistines, even in the matter of opera, as THE NATION, in its superb London way, seems to think. Dr. Cowen, the conductor and trainer of the Scottish Orchestra, has brought his company to such a degree of excellence, that they can essay with success, under a new leader, so notable a task as that of the "Ring," from which they have emerged with high distinction.—Yours, &c.,

EDINENSIS.

Edinburgh, March 15th, 1910.

#### WHY SHOULD THERE BE A SECOND GENERAL ELECTION?

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR,—May I support the view presented in your last issue by "An Old Liberal"? Why should it be supposed that the King will fail to place the prerogative at the disposal of Mr. Asquith, if he should be asked to do so? The working of an unwritten Constitution like our own is de-

termined, as Lord Salisbury saw with respect to finance, by the logic of facts. Surely the essential fact about all the prerogatives of the Crown is that, so long as they are exercised by the King on the advice of his Ministers, the full responsibility attending their exercise rests on Ministers and not on the Crown, but, as soon as they are used or withheld against such advice, then the Crown is drawn into the vortex of party politics. No loyal subject should, I venture to think, suppose for a moment that the King will descend from the position of commanding dignity and wise influence (as distinguished from control) which he now occupies, and mix in party strife. Accordingly, we may assume that the prerogative will be granted, if asked for by a Ministry commanding the confidence of the House of Commons, who will, of course, bear the sole responsibility for the advice they tender, and the real question is whether the situation, as it develops, will require this advice to be given, and justify the Ministry in giving it.—Yours, &c.,

WM. BRAITHWAITE.

Banbury, March 14th, 1910

#### THE NEW INDIAN PRESS ACT.

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR,—It is unfortunate that, on account of the storm and strain of home politics, few English readers will find time to study the speeches of the educated Indian gentlemen whom Lord Morley's reform scheme has happily brought into the Viceroy's Legislative Council. It is unfortunate, because any unprejudiced person reading the debate on the new Indian Press Act must be impressed by the goodwill and sound, practical knowledge which these counsellors, who represent the Congress party, have placed at the disposal of the Government.

Voicing unanimous Indian opinion, they warn the Government that to silence the Press is a very imperfect remedy for the popular exasperation which has led to anarchy; and they affirm unhesitatingly that the root cause of the lamentable outrages is to be found in the despair generated in youthful minds by the harsh repression which accompanied Lord Curzon's policy of reaction, culminating in the partition of Bengal. Remove this thorn from the flesh, and the wound will heal. Deal with the causes of the mischief—not merely with the symptoms. They recognise that the situation has become easier, owing to Lord Morley's reforms, and Lord Minto's sympathetic attitude; and they urge that further steps should be taken along this path of conciliation, which is the path of safety.

But holding such views, these independent members of the Council have nevertheless acquiesced (however sadly) in this fresh blow struck at the freedom of the Press. What is the reason of this? It is because they are unwilling to refuse to the authorities any weapons demanded in the name of public safety. They are determined to resist all attempts to upset the existing government, because they are convinced that the permanent welfare of India is dependent on the British connection, however mistaken or perverse any particular phase of policy may be. To quote the words of the Hon. Mr. Gokhale, the hopes of a peaceful evolution are bound up with the unquestioned continuance of British rule. Or, as expressed by the Hon. Mr. Chitnavis, "anarchy retards the fruition of the country's hopes and its progress. Self-government is attainable only under the ægis of the British Government by a process of slow and peaceful evolution." And I must add the wise and genial words of the Hon. Mr. Bhupendranáth Básu: "We want this rule to continue on an ever widening base, welding the peoples of India into a nation justly proud of its comradeship with England, possessing common rights and common privileges, and sharing in common dangers."—Yours, &c.,

W. WEDDERBURN.

Menton, France,

March 14th. 1910.

#### THE LIBERAL PARTY AND THE WHIPS.

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR,—Your valuable and well-timed article, "Plucked from the Pit," in last week's issue, and the above article in your issue of the 12th inst., signed by "A Radical Member," have admirably expressed the feelings and opinions of many members of the Liberal Party at the

present time. I know of an instance of a candidate who twice communicated with the Chief Whip on the political questions of the day, and to this hour has never even received a simple and polite acknowledgment of his letter. Mr. Herbert Samuel the other day rather aptly said that peoples are generally better than their Governments, and certainly the present Government is no exception to this rule. I should prefer to say, however, that a country has just such a Government as it deserves, and the recent revolt of the Liberal Party, in the direction of bold and fearless action was one of the finest things that has happened for many a long day. It is no use pretending a confidence which does not exist, and if the present leaders and Whips do not realise their duties and responsibilities, they will require to make way for other and more trustworthy men. Declamation, tactics, platform oratory, and virulent class abuse are not equivalents for statesmanship. They have their place and use, but I venture to state that what the Liberal Party hungers for, and very seldom gets, is an appeal to the higher principles of moral justice and righteousness applied to home and foreign affairs, wise economy in expenditure, particularly on armaments, and practical schemes of social reform.—Yours, &c.,

LIBERAL.

March 15th, 1910.

## THE FOREIGN OFFICE AND THE CONGO.

To the Editor of *THE NATION*.

SIR,—After two years' negotiation with the Belgian Government, during which we have asserted times without number that the Anglo-Congolese Convention of 1884 and the Berlin Act of 1885 entitle us, and lay upon us the duty, of intervening in the matter of the Congo, the Belgian Colonial Minister declares in the Senate (February 24th):—

"It does not pertain to the dignity of a free country to admit foreign intervention in our internal affairs. No official intervention! The International Acts relating to the Conventional Basin of the Congo exclude the possibility of it absolutely."

It was only last November that the Prime Minister, speaking in the Guildhall, said: "The agitation in this country with regard to Congo reform . . . has regard to a territory and a population towards which we have undertaken solemn obligations."

What a pitiable figure British diplomacy, backed by a naval expenditure of forty millions sterling, and by a popular mandate which no Foreign Secretary has ever enjoyed in any question, is cutting in this Congo matter!

The Congo is not a party question, but upon Liberals, both in Parliament and out of it, surely rests, a Liberal Government being in power, the chief opportunity and the special duty of stopping the dry-rot.

My Congo mail, received to-day, shows that everything is going on in precisely the same manner as before the Belgian Colonial Minister's visit. It could hardly be otherwise, seeing that the Congo Budget for this year provides that over 50 per cent. of the revenue shall be raised by what is euphemistically called "forced labor."

It is doubtless for this reason that the Foreign Office is renewing its old game of suppressing the reports of its Consular officials—pursued from 1896 to 1904, until the public agitation compelled a change of practice.

No report has been published from any of the Consular staff since January, 1909, and none from the Vice-Consul in the Katanga region of the Congo for over two years.

For what purpose, then, does the nation pay for the upkeep of these officials in the Congo?—Yours, &c.,

E. D. MOREL.

96, Talbot Road, Highgate, London, N.

March 13th, 1910.

## POLICY AND ARMAMENTS.

To the Editor of *THE NATION*.

SIR,—The more 'Dreadnoughts' we build, the weaker our foreign policy becomes, so far as any moral influence is concerned." I was exceedingly glad to read this sentence in your "Diary of the Week."

Surely if £68,000,000 is spent on the Army and Navy, there should be something to show for it.

It used to be held that we wanted an Army and Navy to give us influence in the Councils of Europe for good; but as far as I am able to judge, England now exercises less influence on behalf of the subject races and the oppressed generally than she did in 1850.—Yours, &c.,

J. MARSHALL STURGE.

Evencroft, Charlbury, Oxon,

March 16th, 1910.

## THE CRUSADE AGAINST CONSUMPTION.

To the Editor of *THE NATION*.

SIR,—In your issue of March 12th Mr. Aldridge describes the scheme for the municipal improvement of Paris as the greatest yet known, and says that Paris is "the first municipality to devote a large sum of money to the definite purpose of fighting the 'white scourge' of consumption."

I have no wish to question the accuracy of this statement. But I think it is worth while to call the attention of your readers to the work done in Germany.

I quote from "The German Workman," by Mr. W. H. Dawson, published in 1906. Mr. Dawson pointed out that by that time Berlin, Dresden, Munich, Leipzig, Aix-la-Chapelle, and some other large towns had established sanatoria and isolation homes for tuberculous patients; that Coblenz, Essen, Duisburg, Mülheim, Ruhrort, and Rees levied a special district tax for the same purpose; and that Saxony, Baden, Hesse, had established, and that other parts of the empire were striving for, compulsory notification of tuberculous cases. Further, Mr. Dawson pointed out that in Berlin during the years 1897 to 1904 the Insurance Board expended no less than £1,776,600 in the remedial treatment of workpeople suffering from tuberculosis. This is not exactly a municipal effort, but I trust that those whose interest is aroused by Mr. Aldridge's letter will not fail to read the suggestive chapter on the "Anti-Consumption Crusade" in Mr. Dawson's book.

Your readers will, I hope, pardon me for calling their attention to work with which some of them may be familiar, as Mr. Dawson's later volume, "The Evolution of Modern Germany," was in the hands of many Liberal workers at the General Election.—Yours, &c.,

FRANK E. MARSHALL.

March 15th, 1910.

## Poetry.

## THE FULNESS OF TIME.

On a rusty iron throne,  
Past the furthest star of space,  
I saw Satan sit unknown,  
Old and haggard was his face:  
For his work was done, and he  
Rested in Eternity.

And to him from out the sun  
Came his Father and his Friend,  
Saying, "Now the work is done,  
Enmity is at an end."  
And He guided Satan to  
Paradises that he knew.

Gabriel without a frown,  
Uriel without a spear,  
Raphael came winging down,  
While the cherubs chanted clear,  
"Now the Morning Star shall climb  
Bright as in the olden time."

JAMES STEPHENS.

## The World of Books.

THE "NATION" OFFICE, THURSDAY NIGHT.

THE following is our weekly selection of books which we commend to the notice of our readers:—

"To-day and To-morrow, and other Essays." By Viscount Escher. (Murray. 7s. 6d. net.)

"The Quest of the Historical Jesus: A Critical Study of its Progress from Reimarus to Wrede." By Albert Schweitzer. (Black. 10s. 6d. net.)

"Landmarks in Russian Literature." By Maurice Baring. (Methuen. 6s. net.)

"The Iphigenia in Tauris of Euripides." By Gilbert Murray. (Allen. 2s. net.)

"The Life and Times of Mrs. Sherwood (1775-1851). From the Diaries of Captain and Mrs. Sherwood." By F. J. Harvey Darton. (Wells, Gardner. 16s. net.)

"Sketches and Snapshots." By the Right Hon. G. W. E. Russell. (Smith, Elder. 10s. 6d. net.)

"Across the Sahara." By Hans Vischer. (Arnold. 12s. 6d. net.)

"Farewell to Poesy and Other Pieces." By William H. Davies. (Fifield. 1s. net.)

"Anti-Pragmatism: An Examination into the Respective Rights of Intellectual Aristocracy and Social Democracy." By Albert Schinz. (Unwin. 6s. 6d. net.)

"The Exiles of Faloo." By Barry Pain. (Methuen. 6s.)

"La Vie privée de Talleyrand." Par Bernard de Lacombe. (Paris: Plon-Nourrit. 7fr. 50.)

"L'Organisation de la Démocratie." Par Paul Deschanel. (Paris: Fasquelle. 3fr. 50.)

"Les deux Consciences." Roman. Par Léon de Tinsseau. (Paris: Calmann-Lévy. 3fr. 50.)

"Les Rivaux." Roman. Par Ernest Daudet. (Paris: Plon-Nourrit. 3fr. 50.)

WOMEN form so large a proportion, both of novel-readers and of novel-writers, that it is particularly interesting to have a study of English fiction from a distinctively feminine point of view. Miss Clara Whitmore, who undertakes this task in a book called "Woman's Work in English Fiction," just published by Messrs. Putnams, regrets that nearly all the books on literature have been written from a man's standpoint. In other arts, she holds, the tastes of men and women vary little, but the choice of novels is, to a large degree, determined by sex. There is a good deal of truth in this, though Miss Whitmore exaggerates a little when she says that "no woman can read a novel of Smollett's without loathing." Miss Rebecca Sharpe, at least, did not share this prejudice. "Once," her historian tells us, "when Mr. Crawley asked what the young people were reading, the governess replied, 'Smollett.' 'Oh, Smollett,' said Mr. Crawley, quite satisfied. 'His history is more dull, but by no means so dangerous as that of Mr. Hume.' 'Yes,' said Miss Rose; without, however, adding that it was the history of Mr. Humphrey Clinker."

So determined is Miss Whitmore to give us the true feminine point of view that, whenever her own judgment has been different from the generally accepted one, "the point in question has been submitted to other women, and not recorded unless it met with the approval of a large number of women of cultivated taste." Her book consists of an examination of the work of thirty-five women novelists who have played some part in the development of English fiction, and she claims that it is to her sex we owe the first humanitarian novel, Mrs. Aphra Behn's "Oroonoko"; the first political novel, Mrs. Manley's "New Atalantis"; the first English novel of introspection, Mrs. Sheridan's "Sidney Biddulph"; the first historical novel based upon research, Jane Porter's "The Scottish Chiefs"; the first novel of factory life, Mrs. Trollope's "The Life and Adventures of Michael Armstrong"; the first novel of the relations of capital and labor, Mrs. Gaskell's "North and South"; the first novel depicting Scottish life, Elizabeth Hamilton's "The Cottagers of Glenburnie"; and the first novel depicting Irish life, Maria Edgeworth's "Castle Rackrent."

ALTHOUGH the Empress Eugénie has emphatically denied any intention of issuing her autobiography, some compensation for its non-appearance will be supplied by a book which Messrs. Harper intend to issue shortly after Easter. This is Mr. Legge's "The Empress Eugénie, 1870-

1910." It is based on first-hand information, and will contain material of importance written by Napoleon III. himself. The book gives the Empress Eugénie's statement of her own position, the Emperor's story of Sedan, the history of his exile, and the reminiscences of the Prince Imperial. So much fresh material bearing upon the last days of the Empire has been made public of late—notably by M. Ollivier—that the time has almost come when a definite history of the period can be written.

MESSRS. STANLEY PAUL announce a biography of the Marquise du Châtelet by Frank Hamel, a writer who has shown skill and knowledge in the treatment of French historical personages. Madame du Châtelet is only remembered to-day because of the part she played in Voltaire's life during his long residence at Cirey. But she has also claims to consideration on her own account. She is typical of the eighteenth century in France, both on its light and serious sides, and Sainte-Beuve says that her position in literature and philosophy was one which the women of her day found it easier to smile at than to dispute. She translated Newton's "Principia" into French and was a mathematician of some note in her own time. Voltaire's devotion, as well as her own fame in the world of science, brought upon her the jealousy of Madame du Deffand and Madame de Staël-Delaunay, and Sainte-Beuve declares that the portrait drawn of her by Madame du Deffand is the bitterest and most cruelly satirical passage in French literature. The brilliant though dissolute society of the Regency, among which she moved, forms the background of Frank Hamel's biography, which also introduces the Duc de Richelieu, Saint-Lambert, Hénault, and other names familiar to readers of the memoirs of the period.

MR. PADRAIC COLUM has just finished a new play called "The Magnate," which will be produced at the Abbey Theatre, Dublin, next month. Mr. Colum's work is always fresh and thoroughly Irish in tone, and, since the death of J. M. Synge, he is perhaps the dramatist of most promise of the young Irish school.

UNDER the title of "The Moon of the Fourteenth Night," Messrs. Hurst & Blackett announce a book about Persia which is the joint work of M. Eustache de Lorey and Mr. Douglas Sladen. M. de Lorey has been for several years in the French Legation at Teheran, and the coming work throws fresh light upon the events which led up to the recent revolution, as well as upon Persian manners and customs.

ANOTHER book on Persia is to be issued by Mr. Fisher Unwin. Its title is "Persia in Revolution," and it gives an account of a journey made last spring to Persia and the Caucasus by Mr. J. M. Hone and Mr. P. L. Dickinson. The authors describe life in Teheran during the crisis, and the characters of the leading figures in the struggle are sketched. The concluding chapters treat of the homeward journey, through Baku, Tiflis, Kutais, and Batoum, and special attention is given to the Georgians, a people who once ruled in Transcaucasia and withstood the attacks of both Turks and Russians.

COLONEL HAGGARD's books dealing with the bypaths of French history are always readable, and, in choosing the rivalry of François I. of France and Charles V. of Germany for his coming volume, he has taken a subject full of dramatic interest and color. The period abounds in strongly marked characters, and of these, Bayard, the "Chevalier sans peur et sans reproche," Gaston de Foix, Anne of Brittany, Marguerite, Queen of Navarre and author of the "Heptameron," and Diana of Poitiers figure in Colonel Haggard's pages. The title of the work is "Two Great Rivals," and it will be issued by Messrs. Hutchinson.

A NUMBER of interesting additions will shortly be made to Mr. Murray's "Albemarle Shilling Library," which has already made an excellent start. Among the volumes to appear later are Bishop Gore's "Sermon on the Mount," Mrs. Ady's "Painters of Florence," and Mr. A. C. Benson's "Thread of Gold" and "House of Quiet."

## Reviews.

## MEASURE AND POETRY.\*

THE present age is, by common admission, under the presidency of reason, and it is, therefore, an age not very favorable to poets; yet the number of persons seriously attempting to write poetry nowadays is bewildering. This has puzzled many people; but perhaps an old fable may help us to understand it. The eagle, says the fabulist, deliberately and with foresight makes her nest thorny and uncomfortable, in order to encourage her youngsters to take flight as soon as possible. And this they do, finding it much more comfortable to "cleave the airy way" than to sit at home in the intolerable nest. May it not be even so with our flocks of minor poets? Not that the uncomfortable make of the age in which they were hatched was so built deliberately by the Mother Destiny, on purpose to urge as many of her brood as possible into the poetic ether; such a doctrine would itself be poetic, and so, nowadays, untenable. What is meant is simply that the age undoubtedly is uncomfortable in many ways for persons of poetic perceptions and poetic feelings, and such persons are, therefore, mightily tempted to flutter, however unskillfully, into the freedom of poetic self-expression, and also, since they are human, into print. Were the age otherwise, they might never be heard of; it is the pricking of their poetic skins that sends them aloft into poetry and print, just as the pricked young eagles are all agog to be flying. And arising out of this there is a further temptation—this time a serious one. For one who strongly feels what, without being unduly lax, we may call the poetic emotions, who knows, moreover, that such feeling is uncommon, and will carry one into a kind of writing which is, at least, typographically poetry—such an one is strongly tempted to believe that the possession of those emotions is enough to make one a poet. Thus, Miss L. ffolliott, in her "Songs and Fantasies," says roundly that to feel like a poet is to be a poet; but, in fact, she herself is an instance to the contrary. The very poem in which she makes her assertion begins thus:—

"If you were e'er scorched by consuming fire,  
And felt all flow of words inadequate,  
If you experienced oft a wild desire—  
A striving to be something more than great."

No, that is not how a poet writes. From her verses it is evident that Miss ffolliott feels all that a poet should feel; but she has no diction to match it. She can herself vicariously experience a dramatic moment; but she cannot put it into poetic shape. What she lacks is the faculty of measure; and we have taken her (perhaps ungraciously) as an instance of the fact that poetic emotions are of no use for poetry without measure.

The huge majority of books of poetry published to-day are of this kind—full of the right thought and feeling, right in their kind, at least, but devoid of measure, save for its obvious species, metre. A book that might serve as a touchstone in this matter is Mr. William Porter's charming translation of the "Hyaku-nin-issui." Read in a book of modern poetry, and then read one of these "Hundred Verses from Old Japan," and you will certainly feel what is wrong with the former, if there is anything wrong with it. The translation may not be entirely adequate, but through it one can plainly see the chief wonderful characteristic of the original, the perfection of measure, in this antique Japanese poetry. The themes of the verses are usually slight, but always the thought is wrought into exquisite form, and the expression confined in a verbal shape of delicate rigor, like porcelain.

- \* "Songs and Fantasies." By L. ffolliott. Ffield. 3s. 6d. net.  
"A Hundred Verses from Old Japan." Translated by William N. Porter. Clarendon Press. 2s. 6d. net.  
"The Ballad of the Mad Bird." By Edward Storer. The Priory Press. 1s. net.  
"New Poems." By Richard Le Gallienne. Lane. 5s. net.  
"The Philanthropists." By Ruth Young. Elkin Mathews. 1s. net.  
"Lyra Evangelistica." By Arthur Shearly Cripps. Oxford: Blackwell. 2s. 6d. net.  
"Exultations of Ezra Pound." Elkin Mathews. 2s. net.  
"The Mountain Singer." By Seosamh MacCathmhaoil. Dublin: Maunsel. 2s. 6d. net.  
"Mimma Bella." By Eugene Lee-Hamilton Heinemann. 5s. net.

But the measure which we demand in poetry must not be taken to be only of a repressive, confining kind, a faculty of shaping matter, as it were, from the outside. By this repressive species of measure a man may certainly work his thoughts and feelings into something which is poetry. The process is really one of taste. In it, measure does the office of the gardener's shears, and prunes and shapes the poet's thought into some exquisite convention of topiary work. A good example is Mr. Edward Storer's "Ballad of the Mad Bird." The innermost idea is quite a good one, but nothing unusual—the quest of the First Beauty (or, as it is here called, Truth). Mr. Storer, however, has fashioned this into a charming fantasy, the detail of which, the diction and imagery, is deliberately curious and extravagant. This is natural; for the workmanship here is everything, and in the workmanship whatever originality Mr. Storer may have must appear. The same is true of most of Mr. Le Gallienne's "New Poems"; they are largely made of material which is the common stock of poets, shaped according to received taste; and any effect of novelty in them comes from the detail of the shaping, some curiosity of phrase, as when a night-jar is called "a toad of sound" and "Browning among the birds," and London becomes "that mighty sob, that splendid tear." No sensible person will quarrel with poetry which is made by this topiary-work kind of measure; when the shaping is really well done, it has the undeniable charm of all thoroughly artificial things. But, nevertheless, one soon tires of it, and it is refreshing to find in Mr. Le Gallienne's volume a little of the other kind of poetry, the poetry which has received its measure, not from without, but from within, from some internal energy that naturally makes for form; not from the gardener's shears, but from some strong propensity in the vital sap. Such are the political poems, "The Cry of the Little Peoples," and others, in which a genuine indignation has grown naturally into poetic form, and such are also a few lyrics, like one from Hafiz, of which the first verse runs thus prettily:—

"A Caravan from China comes;  
For miles it sweetens all the air  
With fragrant silks and dreaming gume,  
Attar and myrrh—  
A Caravan from China comes."

Little of the anxious external fashioning appears in Miss Ruth Young's slim book of poems, and there is no need of it. The substance of her poems has gone into form and measure by reason of an active virtue in the substance, like the virtue which compels the substance of a crystal to submit from within to the rigor of beauty. Miss Young has no need to borrow either matter or technique from the common stock of poetry; her matter is all her own, and her technique has no cultivated distinction. But, by reason of this crystallising power in her thought, she can make poetry of a theme like that of her title-poem, "The Philanthropists," a theme which is certainly not poetic until a poet makes it so. Still more to our purpose, as an instance of crystalline measure in poetry, is Mr. Cripps's "Lyra Evangelistica." Mr. Cripps is an African missionary, and the most of his poems deal with the experiences, the exultations and depressions, of his profession. This is poetic matter enough, but that would not, and certainly does not, in the hands of most missionary poets, make it poetry. But with Mr. Cripps his thought always crystallises; it has clean and true form, and will hold the light. "Lyra Evangelistica" is something much better than an earnest expression of deep feeling; it is a book of good poetry. The following, "In Deserto," will do for a fair specimen:—

"God's Fire-ball rolling smooth o'er heavens of glass,  
God's Hand-fed hawk with wide unfuttered gait,  
Are o'er me—as feet wrench'd and worn I pass  
By black-burnt clods, by sandy furrows strait.  
They do their best so lightly, bird and sun,  
But all my struggling leaves my best undone."

With Mr. Cripps, indeed, we are come to the poetry in which both kinds of measure are evident; there is the crystallising first, and then there is the polishing of the crystal. Mr. Ezra Pound would, no doubt, scorn to be thought a poet who polishes his crystals; but it does seem to us that in his "Exultations" he is beginning to allow some outward form to his verses. It was, indeed, remarkable that such a passionate lover of Dante, Villon, and the

poets of Provence, should have been content with a savage and often ludicrous crudity of expression. He seemed to trust entirely to the formative power inherent in his ideas; but those ideas were neither very potent for form nor very interesting as poetic substance. In these "Exultations" of his he is less derivative in matter, his thoughts are often his own, and they are more intense, and, though not free from absurdity, the book contains much that is externally, as well as internally, captivating, as thus:—

"Pale hair that the moon has shaken  
Down over the dark breast of the sea,  
O magic her beauty has shaken  
About the heart of me."

If Mr. Pound will go on with the development in method shown in this latest volume of his, he will add to English poetry something which is unusual riches, and not merely a set of curios. Two poems, at least, in "Exultations" give warrant for this; "Histrion," by virtue of its idea, and the "Ballad of the Goodly Fere," by virtue both of its idea and its execution.

After Mr. Pound's somewhat feverish eccentricities, "The Mountainy Singer" of Mr. Seosamh MacCathmhaoil (the brutal Saxon calls him Mr. Joseph Campbell) seems a book of serene orthodoxy. Yet not very many years ago most of it would have been called outrageously extravagant. That Mr. Campbell can be as modern as anyone, yet keep his work true to the ancient canons, let this exquisite little picture in unmetrical verse show:—

"Night, and I travelling.  
An open door by the wayside,  
Throwing out a shaft of warm yellow light.  
A whiff of peat-smoke:  
A gleam of delf on the dresser within:  
A woman's voice crooning, as if to a child.  
I pass on into the darkness."

With that incisive simplicity and subtle melody which is native in Ireland, Mr. Campbell writes of the earth and mankind, choosing for the latter those figures which have replaced kings and knights as poetic emblems of humanity, fiddlers, pedlars, and ploughmen. As in most modern Irish poetry, one is never very far off politics in Mr. Campbell's songs. Politics, in fact, interfuse the characteristic mixture of realism and mysticism. Several poems, for instance, are of ploughing; and the plough is always both a mystical and a political emblem. This is a strength and a weakness; the mysticism is more vehement for the politics, but it is also narrower. To say of a ploughman that

"All life is bare  
Beneath your share.  
All love is in your lusty hands,"

is to make him a mystical figure; to say that, where the ploughman is not,

"The silence of unlaboured fields,  
Lies like a judgment on the air,"

is even more striking; but it is more politics than mysticism, and it is not altogether true. But when we come to

"Grasslands are not wrought,  
Ploughlands swell with thought,"

we feel that politics and mysticism have kissed each other; and the meeting is memorable.

The late Eugene Lee-Hamilton was one of the finest of recent sonneteers; and he was a poet, therefore, in whom both kinds of measure were in exquisite balance. His thought went into poetic form as naturally as crystalline substance goes into its system of planes and angles; and his conscience would polish and smooth and purify until he came as near perfection as he might. Mrs. Lee-Hamilton, in a brief Preface to "Mimma Bella," describes the tragic suffering which made up most of his life; and it will always be a wonder that such poetic perfection came out of such physical distress. "Mimma Bella" is a sonnet-series in memory of his little daughter; and the tender familiarity of sorrowing reminiscence is invariably wrought elaborately into art. But good sonnets may not be described; only a sample can show what Eugene Lee-Hamilton's art could do:—

"Lo, through the open window of the room  
That was her nursery, a small bright spark  
Comes wandering in, as falls the summer dark.  
And with a measured flight explores the gloom,  
As if it sought, among the things that loom  
Vague in the dusk, for some familiar mark.

And like a light on some wee unseen bark,  
It tacks in search of who knows what or whom?  
I know 'tis but a fire-fly; yet its flight,  
So straight, so measured, round the empty bed,  
Might be a little soul's that night sets free;  
And as it nears, I feel my heart grow tight  
With something like a superstitious dread,  
And watch it breathless, lest it should be she."

#### THE SCOTTISH REFORMATION.\*

ROUND the Scottish Reformation there has waged a long and acrimonious controversy. In the fray, ecclesiastical and secular historians have created a din and dust, which have greatly tended to obscure the vision of the impartial student. According to one school of ecclesiastical writers, the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland was the Mother of Abominations, and in order to bring her evil reign to an end no measures could be too severe. Another, the moderate school, regrets the wholesale and indiscriminating manner in which the power of the Roman Catholic Church was broken, and, especially from an aesthetic point of view, deplores the iconoclastic rage of the Reformers against the ancient cathedrals, and all kinds of religious adornments. Another school, the purely secular, will have it that the Reformation was mainly brought about by a band of associates headed by Knox, who simply substituted one intolerant persecuting ecclesiastical power for another, much to the detriment of genuine liberty. The value of this important work of Dr. Hay Fleming is that by an appeal to historical documents he puts the whole Reformation period in proper focus. At no time is the great mass of the people roused to revolutionary pitch by doctrinal disputes and ecclesiastical controversies with regard to the relations between Church and State. Had there been nothing more than this, Knox would never have headed a national revolt against Rome.

In dealing with the side of the Roman Church which the people could understand, namely, the corruption of the clergy, Dr. Fleming quotes a remark of an old historian to the effect that the "great dissensions and occasions of heresies" were mainly due to "the corruption of morals and profane lewdness of life in churchmen of almost all ranks, together with crass ignorance of literature and all the liberal arts." Decisive evidence on this point is had in the letters which Dr. Fleming prints, written to Cardinal Beaton, by a kinsman, Archibald Hay, in which, referring to the prevailing corruption in the Church, he alludes to those priests who came to the heavenly table "who have not slept off yesterday's debauch," of whom he says "there is no greater danger to be feared from the most noxious animals than from this off-scouring of most abandoned men." But, after all, the most damaging evidence of the state of the pre-Reformation clergy is found in the Appendix, where Dr. Fleming gives a list of many hundreds of the sons and daughters of the celibate clergy of Scotland, recorded in official documents as having been legitimised between 1529 and 1559.

When regard is had to the terrible state of affairs revealed by Dr. Fleming, is it matter for wonder that the early reformers found congenial soil for their doctrines in Scotland, and that when they sealed their doctrines with their blood the popular feeling ran high in their favor—so high, indeed, that when Knox appeared upon the scene he had no difficulty in organising that feeling on a democratic basis, and by means of it breaking the political, as well as the ecclesiastical, power of Rome? In reference to the political side of the Reformation, too little credit has been given to Knox for his far-seeing sagacity in the sphere of statecraft. Dr. Hume Brown, who is an authority on these matters, has called attention to the wide-spread effects of Knox's influence in European politics. He says: "Had Mary on her return to Scotland found her people united in their allegiance to Rome, and their predilection for France, the course of British history must have been different from what it actually became. With three-fourths of her subjects Catholic, Elizabeth could not have held her own against a sovereign in Mary's position, backed by the dominant

\* "The Reformation in Scotland." By D. Hay Fleming, LL.D. The Stone Lectures at Princeton Theological Seminary for 1907-1908. Hodder & Stoughton. 10s. 6d. net.

opinion of Europe." Thus it came about that by heading the Scottish revolt against Rome, Knox at the same time aided the cause of freedom in England, and converted the Reformation from a purely religious dispute into a great national, not to say an Imperial, movement.

It is a common taunt of the Buckle school of historians that in Scotland the Reformation simply meant the exchange of one despotism for another, and in defence of this view Buckle quotes innumerable instances of the continual interference of the Reform clergy with the morals and general habits of the people. Those who reason thus, overlook the fact that the moral laxity of the Roman Catholic régime made discipline a necessity if the reformation was to have ethical as well as religious results. And who was to exercise the necessary discipline? In our day, when the sacred and secular spheres are clearly defined, offences with which the Reformers dealt ecclesiastically are now dealt with secularly; but in the old days the Church had to undertake the work of social reform in the absence of any other organisation. Moreover, the leaders of the Reformation knew nothing of the modern doctrine of individual liberty. The community, not the individual, was the unit, as may be seen from the "First Book of Discipline," where it is laid down, in dealing with education, that no man, whether rich or poor, should be allowed to bring up his children according to his own fancy, but ought to be compelled to bring them up in learning and virtue with profit to the Church and the commonwealth. No doubt, the Reformers overdid their theory, but the remarkable fact remains that modern sociologists and politicians, in dealing with social problems, are going back to the principles which the Reformers embodied in the "First Book of Discipline."

So far from the Reformation being for Scotland simply a change of despotisms, it really sowed the seeds of the democratic sentiments which have profoundly influenced the national life. Take one of the democratic institutions of the Reformation, namely, Kirk Sessions, in which the congregations are represented along with the clergy. In the words of Dr. Fleming

"The benefits derived from the institution of kirk-sessions were not confined to ecclesiastical or religious matters. In them the people received, not only a large measure of local self-government in Church affairs, but by them they were indirectly trained and fitted to look after their civil rights. No doubt the burghs of Scotland had, for centuries before the Reformation, been ruled by town councils; but the members of these town councils were drawn from narrower circles—viz., from the guildry and incorporated trades—and outside the burghs there was no local self-government of any kind, saving that of the kirk-session. . . . Kirk-sessions were not infallible, neither were presbyteries, nor synods, nor general assemblies. It would be easy to point to decisions of these courts which to us seem tyrannical; but the tyranny was not the tyranny of one man; and if it were flagrant enough to rouse opposition, the people had the remedy in their own hands, so far, at least, as the kirk-session was concerned, at the next annual election."

Denunciation of the Reformers and the Covenanters used to be reckoned a mark of intellectual Liberalism. In this particular sphere the cult of the superior person is nearly extinct. Intelligent Scots are now too deeply versed in the history of their country to join in the campaign of depreciation which was started by Buckle and is continued by Mr. Andrew Lang. Dr. Hay Fleming's solid book should do much further to discredit the Buckle school, not so much by the opinions expressed, as by the mass of incontrovertible evidence by which the opinions are backed. As an historical work, Dr. Fleming's book will take high rank. The student of the Reformation will find it illuminating, and the historian indispensable.

#### "THE ADVENTURES OF MARIE LOUISE."\*

In Marie Louise, Archduchess of Austria, Empress of the French, ex-Empress, and Duchess of Parma, the most impartial French biographer finds a difficult and unsympathetic subject. M. Frédéric Masson, in "L'Impératrice Marie Louise," writes only of the Empress. He prudently refrains from knowing either the ex-Empress or the Duchess of

Parma. M. de Saint-Amand, who follows the lady through the leisurely stages of five or six volumes, decides that "she will occupy but a miserable place in history." A single volume, and a short one, has sufficed M. Max Billard for a memoir which is hostile, but without malice. It is a careful work, it gives the reader the security of ample references, and the translation has life and quality.

As Empress, Marie Louise is not at all an ungracious figure. It is necessary to bear in mind the circumstances in which, after Josephine's divorce, she came to France to share Napoleon's throne. Napoleon wanted an heir; but, dictator as he was at this era, he found it more difficult, as Dr. Lenz has observed, to choose a wife for himself among the princesses of Europe than he had done to select consorts for his relatives. Marie Louise was a bargain between Napoleon and the Emperor Francis. Francis handed over his favorite daughter to the man who had vanquished and humiliated him, and Napoleon presented her to France as the prize of his conquests. This was in 1810, when Napoleon, already the victor of many women, was forty-one, and Marie Louise a very unsophisticated schoolgirl of eighteen. About a year before this she had written to her father, concerning a battle that Napoleon was said to have lost: "May he lose his head, too!" An unseemly marriage in many ways, and hurried through at an unseemly rate.

It yielded, however, the heir that Cæsar (so unluckily for himself!) had insisted on; and, as we have said, the young Austrian, in her character of Empress, is by no means an ungracious figure. We cannot at the moment recall the name of the lady-in-waiting who made her royal mistress the subject of a pleasing little book, chiefly domestic. The Comte de Rambuteau, an intelligent and devoted chamberlain (who lived to begin in another office the beautification of Paris), tells us in his "Memoirs" that the very timidity of the youthful Empress invested her with a certain grace; "there was something so pathetically appealing about her." Sir Horace Rumbold, in the volume on Austria which we recently noticed, observes that Marie Louise's "innocent grace and tenderness and her innate and simple piety"—but her piety was really of the formal kind and tinged with bigotry—"made a profound impression on the most domineering spirit of the age." He notes also how she "from the first unconsciously took by storm" not only old *Madame Mère*, but those jealous intriguers, the Bonaparte sisters, Josephine's relentless enemies. This was a triumph, certainly; but we must remember that the women Bonapartes (that Roman matron, the mother, is excepted) were snobs, and Marie Louise was an Emperor's daughter.

Napoleon said at St. Helena that Marie Louise should have been a happy woman, for, though her reign was brief, the world was at her feet. She seems to have been happy enough, in a manner neither very original nor very imperial. Doubtless she was too young, and perhaps also at this date, too timid, to realise her position to the full; but we cannot altogether overlook her desperate lack of imagination. Josephine, even with the crown on, betrays a little of the *gamine* (everyone remembers how she "grewed" among the sugar-canes); but she addresses herself in a curious way to the fancy. We may be rating her in cold print for her goings-on with the booby Hippolyte Charles, or for the dreadful fibs she tells Bonaparte about her new necklace or her old debts; but we are always wondering, with quite real interest, what she is going to do next, and are always fain to admit that she was a completely human imperial woman. Josephine, however, was a Creole. The daughter of the towering House of Hapsburg and of the Germanic Cæsars, whose father was the last titular head of the great-sounding Holy Roman Empire—she was just a phlegmatic little German bourgeoisie. There is not, in the presence of Marie Louise, any question of heart-thumps; there is not so much as an accelerated movement of the pulse. Josephine was long in perceiving what was essentially great in Napoleon; Marie Louise seems never to have perceived it at all. The emotion of awe it was not in her to experience, but there were lesser heights of feeling which the lymphatic German could hardly scale. Thus, we cannot bring ourselves to think that Napoleon—whom in secret a thousand hearts worshipped from afar—was ever even intelligently admired by the second of the two women whom he crowned.

Hence, when his Empire had rushed to ruin, she behaved

\* "The Marriage Ventures of Marie Louise." By Max Billard. English version by Evelyn, Duchess of Wellington. Nash. 12s. 6d. net.

as she could not but behave. She was dull of nature, and she was a faithful daughter of the august family that had produced and bred her. Faithful to her father, she deserted her husband and his cause. The thunder-peals of dissolution could scarcely leave her unmoved, for they heralded the loss of the most dazzling station a woman could occupy in the Europe of that date; but we have suggested that the full significance of this station was unrevealed to her imperfect understanding. Those claps of fate predicted also the complete dispossessing of her infant son, Napoleon's heir; but him too she abandoned. Napoleon passes, a setting of the sun or shooting of the dawn in the common round and travail of the world; his eagles sink, his "drums and trappings" cease; and, in the wreck, Marie Louise disappears, prompt to the call of her father, and bequeaths to France a memory as empty of heroism as of romance. Her great-aunt, Caroline of Naples (a lady who owed little to Napoleon) sent word to her through Méneval that she ought to have tied her sheets together and made off to Elba—but such romantic flights were not for Marie Louise.

Instead, she allows herself to be drawn into a basely concerted union with Neipperg. This one-eyed lady-killer, who was illegitimate, had seen service in the army and in diplomacy, and was a distinctly capable man of affairs. He was also most unscrupulous in his gallantries. At the time he laid siege to Marie Louise he was married to a woman whom he had carried off from her lawful husband. Metternich despatched him to pay court to the empress, and M. Billard hints that her father was privy to the plot. Neipperg triumphed. He became the lover of Marie Louise, and a daughter was born to them, "whose advent and baptism could only be mentioned with bated breath." This was in 1817, not two years after Napoleon's departure for St. Helena. A stranger thing happened. Neipperg's wife had died, and from the varied evidence gathered and presented by M. Billard, we are driven to the conclusion that Marie Louise was secretly and—in effect—bigamously married to him in 1820. Vainly it is asked how and by whom the marriage ceremony was performed. The guilty pair perhaps suborned some innocent rustic of a priest, or one who had saved his skin by abjuring his faith during the Revolution. Whoever he was, he stood within the danger of excommunication. It is a back-stair business, and the reader gets a shock from it. He can little forget that just before this unseemly union is accomplished, Marie Louise has silently allowed her son to be deprived of maternal inheritance and dynastic name, and that just after it, Napoleon, confronting death, is bidding doctor Antommarchi carry his heart to her in spirits of wine. The history of Neipperg as the husband of Marie Louise is comprised in a sentence: He administered the Duchy of the wife who bored him as if it had been the private estate of a mistress he adored.

Neipperg died in the winter of 1829. In 1829 France was filled with the spirit of the Romantics; and Marie Louise, putting her years behind her, was for romanticism at any cost. The Comte de Bombelles, an uninteresting, excellent man, tacked to the skirts of history as the third husband of the second wife of Napoleon, came to Parma, and was captured by her. She appointed him successor to Neipperg, proposed marriage to him, and seems almost to have marched him to the altar. Upon this marriage authentic history is silent. There are no documents, and the Comte de Bombelles has the credit of the man who refused to write.

It is a curious, and, in the main, a sordid story. The reader of it can scarcely help siding with the writer, whose summing-up leaves Marie Louise dishevelled and debased. On the whole, however, we cannot but think that in another generation there may be another word for her. Pushed as a girl into a marriage that instinctively revolted her, she made the best of it. She showed no heroism in Napoleon's defeat, and little decency in her desertion of him; but in the days that have been counted as a disgrace to her, she was still not much more than an unimaginative girl at the beck of a father who had machined her into a puppet. She is an uninteresting, unsympathetic, and unimaginative woman, with an unamusing strain of sensuality, who was largely spoiled by a training from which she never recovered.

#### ROMANTICS AND IMPRESSIONISTS.\*

A PREFATORY note to "The Higher Life in Art" informs us that the six lectures on painters of the Barbizon School formed the first course of the Scammon Lectures, and were delivered by Mr. John La Farge at the Art Institute of Chicago in May, 1903. Published recently under the above somewhat cryptic title, they deal with Delacroix and Géricault, Millet, Decamps and Diaz, Rousseau, Dupré, Daubigny and Corot, and, more generally, with the whole artistic movement with which these names are connected. The lectures, we think, make their appearance in very much the same form as that in which they were delivered. They possess but few literary graces. Compared, let us say, with Reynolds's Discourses, or, to take a more modern instance, with those of Mr. Clausen, their surface is raw and unpolished. But they have several compensatory qualities; strong individual feeling, downright sincerity, and, above all, a convincing flavor of intimacy with the subject, and a firm grasp of its manifestations and their meanings. Their author is not a young man. He can remember several of the painters of whose work he writes, and that at a time when their work had obtained but little recognition; and he has spoken with those who remember still earlier painters. His lectures, therefore, have a good deal of the charm of a personal reminiscence, while at the same time the familiarity is not of the kind that detracts from the dignity of an utterance. His contribution on Delacroix is a peculiarly well-informed and introspective study of that master's art, which does much to bring him into line with the Fontainebleau group of which, strictly speaking, he was a precursor rather than a member.

Apart from Géricault and Delacroix, it is difficult, when one thinks of the artists who are generally accepted as being of the Barbizon School, to find many features that are common to all of them. On the contrary, sharp lines of division reveal themselves. Corot, for example, is identified with its landscape; but the landscape of Corot is very different in intention and achievement from that of Rousseau, Dupré, and Daubigny. Corot introduced figures into his landscape dreams, figures, too, of astonishing reality and power, and what is more, his close study of the human figure controlled in great measure the manner of his landscape. The sense of form, the beauty of line and curve, that mark the true figure-painter, are reproduced in Corot's pictures of the dawn and the evening, with the addition of values, of the relationship of tones, that formed his great contribution to the science of landscape-painting. Rousseau and his associates, on the contrary, were true landscapists, unaffected by the human element; Nature was all-sufficing to them, and it was her message alone that had to be interpreted. We have thus, to begin with, a line of demarcation between the two classes of landscapists in the group, between those who, like Corot and, to some extent, Decamps and Diaz, worked under the influence of human figure study, and those who, like Rousseau, approached nature from a wholly different point of view. Then there was Millet, a group by himself; humanity his sole concern; nearer, perhaps, to Corot than to Rousseau in his sympathies, but sufficiently far from both. Decamps was notorious for his disregard of those values which were one of Corot's high aims. Diaz, loved by everybody, was unlike anybody. It is difficult indeed to find any bond of unity between these so diverse artists except the bond that united them in opposition to Academic authority. Of this spirit of opposition, however, Mr. La Farge has a good deal to say. Authority had imposed on art a classical ideal that was exceedingly narrow, and against its narrowness the freer members of the profession rebelled. It was not a revolt against the past, but against its too narrow interpretation; these Romantic painters and the painters of Barbizon were contending for a wider view of what the past teaches.

It was as revolutionists of this kind—opponents of Academic authority—that the members of the Barbizon group were in the beginning accepted as guides by the painters who were afterwards to constitute the Impressionist

\* "The Higher Life in Art." By John La Farge. Unwin. 8s. 6d. net.

"Manet and the French Impressionists." By Theodore Duret. Translated by J. E. Crawford Flitch, M.A. Grant Richards. 12s. 6d. net.

School. M. Theodore Duret, who writes so eloquently and with such intimate knowledge of this later group, reminds us that before the uprising of Manet the Impressionists were content to take Corot and Courbet as their masters. Manet, however, opened out for them an entirely new set of possibilities. Working in the face of bitter public opprobrium and of rejection after rejection by the Salon, he gradually forced it home upon them that the truthful painting of subjects in full daylight, be the subjects what they might, was at least as worthy an artistic aim as the academic concoction of landscapes or figure-pieces; that positive color was the artist's heritage, of which he should take the utmost advantage consistent with the real canons of art. Yet Manet does not wholly belong to the Impressionists as we recognise them in Pissarro, Monet, Renoir, or Cézanne. Only part of his output was the "open-air" painting that came to be their watchword; he has little to do with the chromatic developments of Monet and the pointillists. His position in French art is a solitary one; at times he seems a little near to Delacroix; at other times he ranges himself definitely with the new men. He stands, perhaps, in the same relation to the Impressionists as Delacroix to the Barbizon painters; with the difference that the phase of French art which he inspired was a far more violent change from what had gone before than any conceived by the Romantic artist. French tradition weighed considerably with Delacroix, who quarrelled only with the current manner of its interpretation; the Impressionists broke with tradition altogether. In this way Impressionism, which it is the fashion to regard as a French growth, was in reality non-national, a thing removed from that reverence for tradition and order which swayed, and still sways, the main current of French aesthetics. M. Duret's account of Manet, Pissarro, Claude Monet, Sisley, Renoir, Berthe Morisot, Cézanne, and Gillaumin is graphic in its details of the opposition encountered by these strugglers for independence, and of the physical hardship endured by those of them who were without private means of subsistence. Particularly valuable is his sketch of their influence upon German painting. In the case of Monet, considerations of space doubtless prevented the author from dealing at all fully with the technical theories of this master, and we get no more than a glimmer of the scientific side of his art—of that side which has been so amply discussed in Mr. Wynford Dewhurst's book on his master, and so brilliantly in Mr. W. C. Brownell's "French Art." But the work as a whole has great æsthetic insight, as well as the human charm that makes for interest, while the illustrations—with the exception of some of Manet's pictures which reproduce harshly in half-tone—are all that could be desired.

#### MORE BOOKS FOR "EVERYMAN."\*

AGAIN we may congratulate Mr. J. M. Dent upon a further fifty volumes of "Everyman's Library," making four hundred and fifty in all. We have heard much of the best hundred books. Mr. Dent has discovered the best four hundred and fifty, and in his anxiety to do this he has even included the weirdest of all Lord Avebury's selection, "The Ramayana and the Mahabharata." Occasionally we come across a piece of actuality indeed, as when Captain Scott writes an introduction to Franklin's "Journey to the Polar Sea." There are books here that the present generation has forgotten, but will re-read with profit. Galt's "Annals of a Parish" is one of these, and Miss Martineau's "Feats on the Fjord" (a charming work) is another. Gibbon's "Decline and Fall" is here in six handy volumes. Plutarch's "Lives" in the form in which they are least known to the present generation—the famous "Dryden Plutarch"—are included. They were revised by Arthur Hugh Clough, who wrote a very fine introduction, here reprinted. The book was first published in 1864. For the practical reader this is a better book than North's "Plutarch," which has been many times reissued of late years. One other volume of history is Merivale's "Rome," an excellent and serviceable introduction to the same writer's "History of the Romans Under

the Empire," a book which Mr. Dent may well be persuaded to add to the series. Finally, that now established classic, Rawlinson's "Herodotus," originally published in four volumes in 1858, is here supplied in two.

Fiction we have in one of Ainsworth's novels, a pleasant demonstration that a favorite novelist of our boyhood has still vitality, and indeed "The Tower of London" is as much worth reading to-day as it was half a century ago. "Pendennis" is here, and "The Swiss Family Robinson," also Henry Kingsley's fine story, "Geoffrey Hamlyn." Altogether the fiction in these reprints makes one feel young again. These are precisely the books that as boys we devoured most eagerly. Many will welcome the two volumes of "Gil Blas," a book much more frequently praised than read. The lover of poetry will rejoice in so well printed an edition of Spenser's "Faerie Queene," and this in spite of Macaulay's famous comment that "few and weary are they who are in at the death of the blatant beast," a pleasing indication that even Macaulay's voracious appetite for reading stopped short at good poetry, for the "blatant beast" does not die. Mr. Saintsbury, on the other hand, has declared that the "Faerie Queene" is the one poem in our language that he wishes were longer.

In wandering pleasantly through these fifty treasures of literature, we ask ourselves whether the introductions are a help or a hindrance. We have no hesitation in praising the bibliographies, or, at least, some of them. Not all are thorough. A bibliography at the beginning of a book is essential, so also are a few biographical details. Opinions, on the other hand, we are inclined to deem little better than impertinence. There is an impertinence of praise as well as of blame. Criticism may be acceptable in a newspaper, and sound criticism in a volume of essays is most welcome. But what right has Smith or Jones to fix his opinions of Thackeray, or of Dickens, of Maria Edgeworth, or of Dumas, in front of a book by one of these authors: here we cannot escape him. Yet there are introductions that more than justify themselves. The half-dozen pages, for example, that Mr. A. R. Waller has added to Florio's "Montaigne" are a case in point. The note that Mr. Austin Dobson has added to the "Plays and Poems of Oliver Goldsmith" is entirely satisfactory, although this we have read before. In any case, with introductions or without introductions, fifty volumes of the best authors, many of them not too accessible hitherto, thus thrown broadcast among the English-speaking race—and not merely fifty volumes, but four hundred and fifty—write down their publisher as a benefactor of his race, and, we hope, a good business man as well.

#### AN UNORTHODOX STORY-TELLER.\*

THE ban of the circulating libraries, with one exception, has, we are informed, now fallen on Gorky's last novel, "The Confession." Probably the title seemed suspicious and, on examination, passages must have proved as "doubtful" as many in the Confessions of St. Augustine. Probably the unexpurgated editions of the saint's masterpiece are now on the "reserved list," for it is clear that the Latin father and the Russian author should be expelled from the temple together. Both desire "joy in the truth," and both describe the inner struggle between a man's spiritual nature and the terrors and evils of life. It is true that predestination, man's fall and corruption, which St. Augustine preached with such zeal, are doctrines dismissed by Gorky with abhorrence, but both writers denounce worldly impurity with the directness that is regarded as pernicious in library circles.

"A Confession" is by no means artistically a success. Gorky's moral purpose is too overpowering for that, and, no doubt, his exile from Russia is drying up the living springs of his talent. But the book, which takes the shape of a direct attack on the Russian clergy, is of interest because this man of the people is seen searching in anguish of spirit for a new religion, a faith that may stand firm amid the crumbling ruins of supernatural dogma. The result is an inner ferment out of which the vague idea persistently emerges that "the spirit of the people, the immortal people,

\* "Everyman's Library." Vols. 400 to 449. Dent. 1s. net each.

\* "A Confession." By Maxim Gorky. Everett. 6s.

is the only parent of gods that have been and are yet to come." In time to be, a new ideal will be shaped for the whole world. "The actual god with whom your mind is occupied—a god of beauty, wisdom, justice, and love"—will be the human ideal deified, but no longer raised into the region of the supernatural. There is nothing specially original in this thought, but Gorky's intense faith in common humanity is sung as a Credo: "All that is on earth, all that lives in your mind, all that—has been created by the people; whereas the aristocrats have given only the final polish to the work."

Matve, the hero of "A Confession," is an illegitimate child, who is adopted "out of sheer boredom," by the kind sacristan, Hilarion, in the village of Sokol. Hilarion is an original person, who is not afraid to tell the peasants that the devil is an invention, and that the forces of evil are man's bestiality and stupidity. When the police inspector and the parish priest scheme together to extract money from the ignorant villagers, and a miraculous picture of "The Burning Thornbush" is found shining at the bottom of the well, and the peasants are urged to bring their offerings and build a chapel on the sacred spot, Hilarion betrays the imposture. The sacristan is, however, drowned soon after this, and Matve, who has earned a reputation for devoutness, and is called "the little saint," goes to live with Titov, the land-bailiff. Titov is an unjust steward, who uses his power by fleecing the peasants on the one hand, and by defrauding the great landowner, Lossev, on the other. Titov's idea is that sin—and his whole life is sin—may be compounded for by prayer. "Pray very fervently for me, and all my family, Matve," he says. "That will be my reward for having received you beneath my roof and cherished you." But when Matve falls in love with his daughter Olga, Titov insists that his future son-in-law must join with him in robbing the weak. "Whilst I was wading in the mire of sin," says Titov, "you were living an honest life, and would even like to continue living honestly—at the cost of my sinning. It is easy enough for an honest man to enter Paradise—if a sinner carries him there on his back. Far better that you should do the sinning." Matve succumbs to temptation, in order to gain Olga. Their marriage is a happy one, but Matve's soul is always uneasy. He sees sin triumphant everywhere. "The God of glory sits far, far away, enthroned in all His majesty and might, while men herd together in misery and need. Man's soul is blinded by the black misery of life. Where in them is the strength of the Father's love? Where, in short, is God, and where is the divine?" Olga dies in childbed, and Matve is distraught, and wanders away, cursing God. He can get no satisfaction from the priests, nothing to ease his aching misery. He goes to a learned arch-priest to confide his doubts about God's mercy, and the priest crushes him with his anger, tells him he is a lying heretic, and threatens him with the police. Matve escapes, and is sheltered by a humane girl, Tatiana, a Magdalen, who tells him that his thoughts about God are "much too bold," and that he must go and consult holy Mother Fevronia the anchoress. Matve decides, after pondering, that the best thing he can do is to enter a Sabbatine monastery, where in study and meditation he may find inner peace. But the life led by the monks is even more ugly than that of the peasants. Hatred and malice, and the lusts of the flesh trouble the souls of the austere, while others, like Father Antonius, the aristocrat who has retired from the world, use their money to procure vicious pleasures in secret. Cards, women, and wine are not strange to the monastery. In drawing this picture of monkish hypocrisy, Gorky does not seem to be writing from observation but from hearsay. The whole effect is lopsided, and there is little to differentiate it from the class of medieval satires on the life monastic. In disgust with his surroundings, Matve breaks his vows and turns pilgrim, attaching himself to those bands of poor wanderers who traverse Russia, aimlessly passing from shrine to shrine, begging their bread as they go. But there is no living truth in their life. "They collect the discourses of pious monks, the prophecies of hermits and anchorites, and then distribute them among themselves, just as children do the fragments of a broken vessel. Finally I saw no men, only the ruins of a wasted life, dirty human dust, which floats over the earth, and is whirled by all the winds to the steps of churches." What strikes Matve most

of all is that man does not seek God, but only oblivion of his individual grief. His is "the vain anxiety to get rid of his wretchedness, so he tries to avoid action of any kind, dreads to take his part in life, and seeks only a quiet corner wherein to hide himself." Everywhere Matve finds people embittered by suffering, believing only in evil, thinking and rejoicing in evil desperately. In their misery they have no pity for others' sorrow; they lie down before the strong, but they are wolves where the weak are concerned. And "there is no God for the poor . . . no." "He who is replete seeks only to justify the fact that his belly is full while all around him are starving." In despair with this "narrow, bitter, cruel, everyday life," in which even the seemingly benevolent look for their gain in a future life, saying in their prayers, "Don't forget, O God, how much I have paid you!" Matve tries fresh experiences. He becomes a town workman, but factory life seems a stupid and narrow sort of existence. "Everybody was chained to a task and moved all his life long in the same groove, like a dog on a chain." He recalls that he has felt most happiness when he has been alone, at night, resting on the earth under the stars. "You feel intensely the richness of life, and earth herself becomes alive beneath your feet, and seems so full of sap, so familiar and home like."

Although "A Confession" doubtless suffers from the translation being made from the German and not from the Russian edition, it is perfectly clear that Gorky's artistic sense, never very strong, is fast perishing, in proportion as his ethical and social propaganda waxes powerful. His style is cloudy, his picture vague, his characters have no individuality, and the development of his narrative is absolutely artless. His aim is now to propagate ideas, not to depict life. The communistic ideal that is so deeply implanted in the Russian soul is, perhaps, sapping the audacious individualism that originally marked him out as a new force in Russian thought. Perhaps Gorky has done his work. But whether or no, he at least has not compounded with the enemy. His voice is still uplifted in defence of the right to happiness of the poor and the weak.

#### BOOKS IN BRIEF.

"THE knowledge that the House of Lords can at any time force a dissolution by throwing out the financial proposals of the Government would be, of itself, sufficient to make it necessary so to compose a Ministry that it can command the support of that House." This sentence of the Lord Chancellor's in the introduction to Professor J. H. Morgan's little book, "The Lords and the Constitution" (Methuen, 1s.), well serves to mark the organic connection between the narrower financial issue between Lords and Commons, and that larger issue which is now absorbing public attention. Professor Morgan's chapters, most of which appeared originally as articles in the "Westminster Gazette," constitute the most acute and accurate indictment of the constitutional action of the Lords in rejecting the Finance Bill that has appeared. In clear and precise terms the writer describes the position and powers of the Lords in our Constitution, and makes evident from history and accepted authorities the place occupied by usage and convention in the exercise of "legal" powers, so enforcing the exact nature of the breach of the Constitution committed last November. Constitutionally this action was a revolution, undermining suddenly the slowly built edifice of financial control by the Commons. Politically it was a revolution, in that it implied in the future the destruction of the balance of the party system in our scheme of representative government, by depriving one of the great parties of that power of the purse which is essential to their efficiency as a legislative and administrative organ. The willingness of prominent statesmen, and in a few instances jurists, to repudiate all obligations to obey conventions is an amazing revelation of the reckless opportunism to which the party of Conservatism is willing to resort in the defence of "interests" which they deem to be assailed. "Oral tradition, precedent, usage, and a consensus of authoritative opinion in the text-books," all the pillars of authority

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"HINTS FOR LOVERS," by Mr. Arnold Haultain (Constable, 4s. 6d. net), is a series of epigrams strung together by connecting conjunctions and adverbs, which rather take away from their effect. The epigram, as most who have tried it will agree, is not an easy form of writing—or reading. Mr. Haultain, however, maintains a fair average. We add a few of his efforts: "A woman's emotions are as practical as a man's reason." "A girl thinks she detects flippancy in seriousness. A woman thinks she detects seriousness in flippancy." "It is only the man who thinks he is too venturesome." "Ideal matrimony is founded on a mono-metallic basis: no amount of silver will be accepted for gold." "Matchmaking is one of the most fascinating of feminine avocations." "If the sexes were to change places more marriage licences would be taken out."

MR. J. H. RITSON, in his "Abroad for the Bible Society" (Robert Cullery, 3s. 6d. net), apologises for its shortcomings profusely enough to disarm the most captious of critics. The book is the record of a seven months' tour in China and Japan, Korea, Manchuria, and Siberia, and like most works of its class, it deals rather superficially with a great many phases of life in these countries, and thoroughly with none. The pious ejaculations, which seem to have been implanted in evangelical literature since the days of George Borrow, are not wanting; and we deprecate, not merely the seeming ignorance of, but also the attitude of mild pleasantry adopted towards, the great non-Christian religions that still exert some influence in the Far East. Otherwise, the narrative is readable enough, and we get valuable glimpses of travel conditions in Siberia and elsewhere, not to mention a deal of information regarding the missionaries and native colporteurs who assist in the distribution of the Bible Society's publications. An unusually liberal supply of photographic illustrations adds to the attractions of the volume.

MESSRS. SIDGWICK AND JACKSON issue in their "Pocket-Book Series" a volume of "Selections from Dickens," and an anthology of English lyrics and ballads, called "Famous Poems" (1s. 6d. net each). In both cases the selections have

been made with judgment, though we are surprised in the latter volume at seeing Byron represented by a single lyric. The little books are attractive in form, slip easily into the pocket, and have the further advantage of being printed in excellent type.

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THE decision of the Directors of the Bank of England to raise their rate was not a surprise, but the jump from 3 to 4 per cent. was a big step, and its consequences may be considerable. New York especially will dislike the change, for Wall Street just now is nervous and despondent. The American market is suffering from various causes. First of all there are the labor disputes, due to discontent at the rising cost of all the comforts and necessities of life. The strikes and lockouts in Philadelphia and in the cotton and thread mills of Massachusetts and Rhode Island have been disquieting. But the threat of a general railway strike on the lines west of Chicago is still more alarming. Then again the probability of a tariff war between the United States and Canada has upset the Markets. For such a war the Aldrich-Paine Tariff would be held responsible, and rightly so; and this may easily bring about a heavy defeat of the Republican Party. Stock markets which are bolstered up by the Trust magnates cannot contemplate such a prospect with equanimity. Altogether the outlook for both American and Canadian securities is decidedly cloudy. Meanwhile the boom in rubber and rubber shares has continued unabated, and the last Stock Exchange account is one of the heaviest on record. The quantity of transactions has been seldom equalled, and experts go back to the Kaffir boom of 15 or 16 years ago for a parallel. The bankers' clearing house made a record last Wednesday, and the trade with India is also remarkably heavy.

### MONEY AND THE BUDGET.

The stringency of the money market may be partly due to the suspension of the Budget. For if the Income-tax had been collected in the usual way there would not have been such low market rates in the last few weeks. Cheap money has led to gold exports, and these again in their turn have tightened up the market and produced the 4 per cent. rate. It is generally expected that this rate will bring gold from Europe and also—unless the financiers prevent it—from the United States. As for the Budget, the City would like to see the ordinary Income-tax collected. But the super tax is very unpopular with those who would have to pay it.

### NEW YORK BONDS.

The issue last week of New York City 4<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> per cent. gold bonds at par, irredeemable until 1930, provides an attractive investment, as they are either in coupon or registered form. The London issuing house is Messrs. Seligman Bros. Until the latter part of 1907 New York paid less than 4 per cent. for capital, but in September of that year 4<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>s brought only a fraction above par. The last offering, in December, 1909, was disposed of on an income basis of 3<sup>9</sup>/<sub>8</sub> per cent., but since then the quotation has fallen appreciably below the issue price of 100 1-3. The retrenchments enforced by the new administration may re-establish confidence in New York City's obligations. For many years the City did not receive an adequate *quid pro quo* for each dollar spent, but this is being changed. Economies have already been effected more than sufficient to pay the interest on \$50,000,000 at 4<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> per cent.—\$2,125,000. Nevertheless, for the moment at any rate, the supply of New York bonds exceeds the demand. Hence what seems a favorable opportunity. The security is at least as good as that of Copenhagen, which is borrowing at 4 per cent. On the other hand the issues of American railroad and industrial bonds, as well as the short term obligations financed on this side, have been so heavy that any immediate recovery of this market is extremely improbable.

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